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GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

JANUARY 2016

GREAT DIXTER

Anna Pavord reflects on the past decade

BEAUTIFUL AND TOUGH

The best plants for cold climates

CAPABILITY BROWN

Celebrating his enduring legacy

KEY GARDENING EVENTS IN 2016

LATEST TRENDS

in design and planting

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editor's letter

January is a great time for planning holidays and this issue we make a whistle-stop tour around the world, visiting some inspiring places and talking to some remarkable gardeners. These include an idiosyncratic plant nursery in Portland, Oregon, USA, and a beautifully planted garden in the breathtaking location of Fisherman's Bay in New Zealand. Matthew Biggs talks to Ulf Nordfjell, Sweden's leading garden designer, about great hardy plants that will thrive in cold climates, and we profile Ron Finley, the LA-based guerilla gardener who is transforming communities by teaching about the power of growing your own food. Sometimes taken for granted by those of us who live here, England is a fabulous destination, with some of the finest gardens in the world, including Great Dixter in East Sussex. To mark the ten-year anniversary of the death of the influential gardener and writer Christopher Lloyd, Anna Pavord, who has known the garden for more than 30 years, reflects on the past decade and celebrates the continued spirit of adventurous plantsmanship. We are organising a Reader Event at Dixter on 20 June, with Anna and head gardener Fergus Garrett in conversation (details will be published on gardensillustrated.com and in the April issue). Looking forward to 2016, we catch up with leading designers about this year's trends, and key plant experts reveal what they are growing this year. I hope you enjoy the issue and wish you a very happy New Year.

Juliet

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GREAT DIXTER

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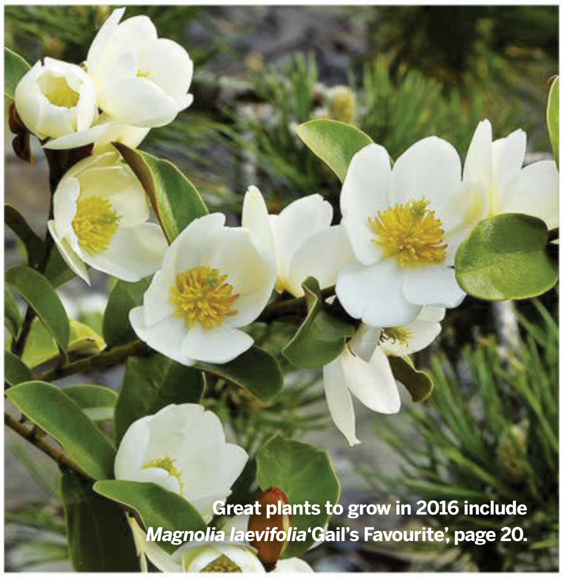
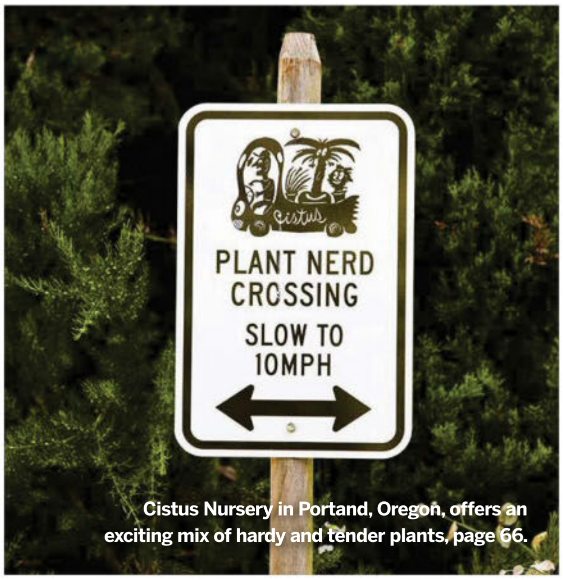


Great plants to grow in 2016 include *Magnolia laevifolia* 'Gail's Favourite', page 20.



Cistus Nursery in Portand, Oregon, offers an exciting mix of hardy and tender plants, page 66.

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Plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex.

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JOHN MASSEY CLAIRE TAKACS

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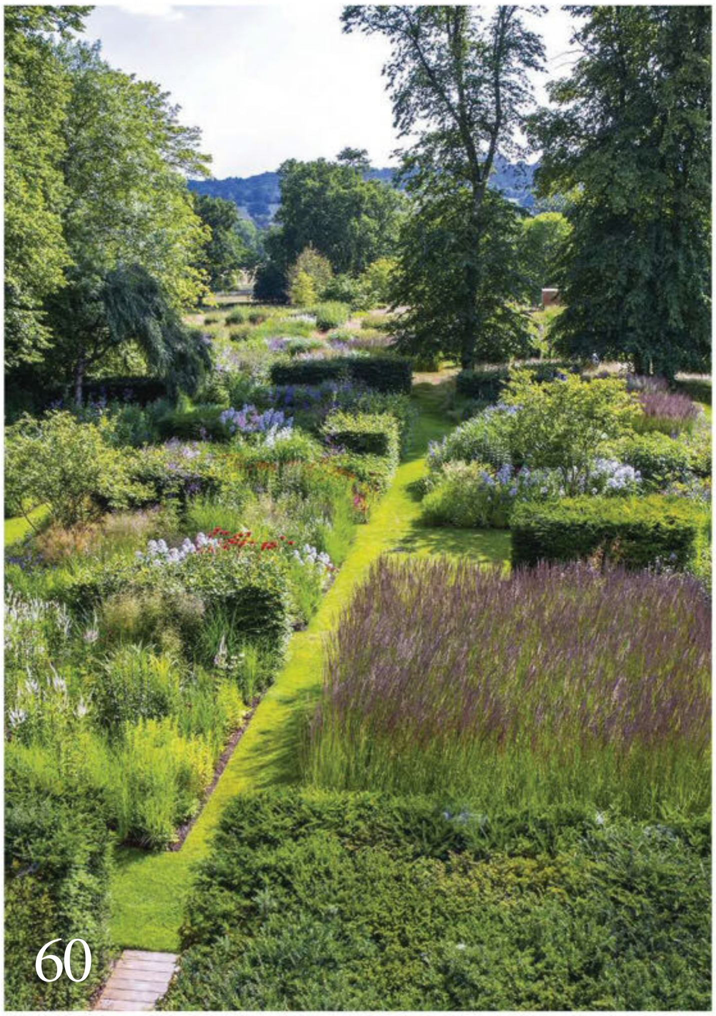

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Photography by
Andrew Montgomery

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MARIANNE MAJERUS, ANDREW MONTGOMERY

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CLAIRE TAKACS, ANDREW MONTGOMERY

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contributors

ANDREW MONTGOMERY

ALI BELL

Ali is a fine art graduate and designer, passionate about wildlife gardening and indoor plants. Based in Dorset she is currently developing her own wildlife garden while thinking of creative ways to bring plants into the home. She shows how to style terrariums on page 44.

"I would love everyone to try making a terrarium. Developing your own mini eco-system is a magical way to connect with nature."

MATTHEW BIGGS

Matthew is a Kew-trained gardener, writer and broadcaster. He has travelled extensively in Scandinavia, observing the native and garden flora, and is fascinated by plants that survive in harsh conditions. On page 50 he looks at some of the best of these for UK gardens.

"It was intriguing to compare my experiences with the plant selection chosen by Chelsea Best in Show designer, Ulf Nordfjell."

SARAH YOUNG

Sarah is an illustrator, designer, printmaker and painter, who often uses nature, myth and folklore as inspiration for her work. For the past two years, she has illustrated Jojo Tulloh's gardener, cook column, and you can see her latest illustrations on page 25.

"I love illustrating Jojo's column and this year I'm resolving to introduce some of her ideas into my own garden and kitchen."

KIRSTIE YOUNG

LIA LEENDERTZ

Lia writes about gardening and cooking for publications including *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph*, and has a garden and allotment in Bristol. She has written several gardening books and is currently working on her first cookery book. She reviews *The Book of Pears* on page 97.

"What a pleasure to receive a book as special as this to review. So clearly the result of great knowledge and a vast amount of work."

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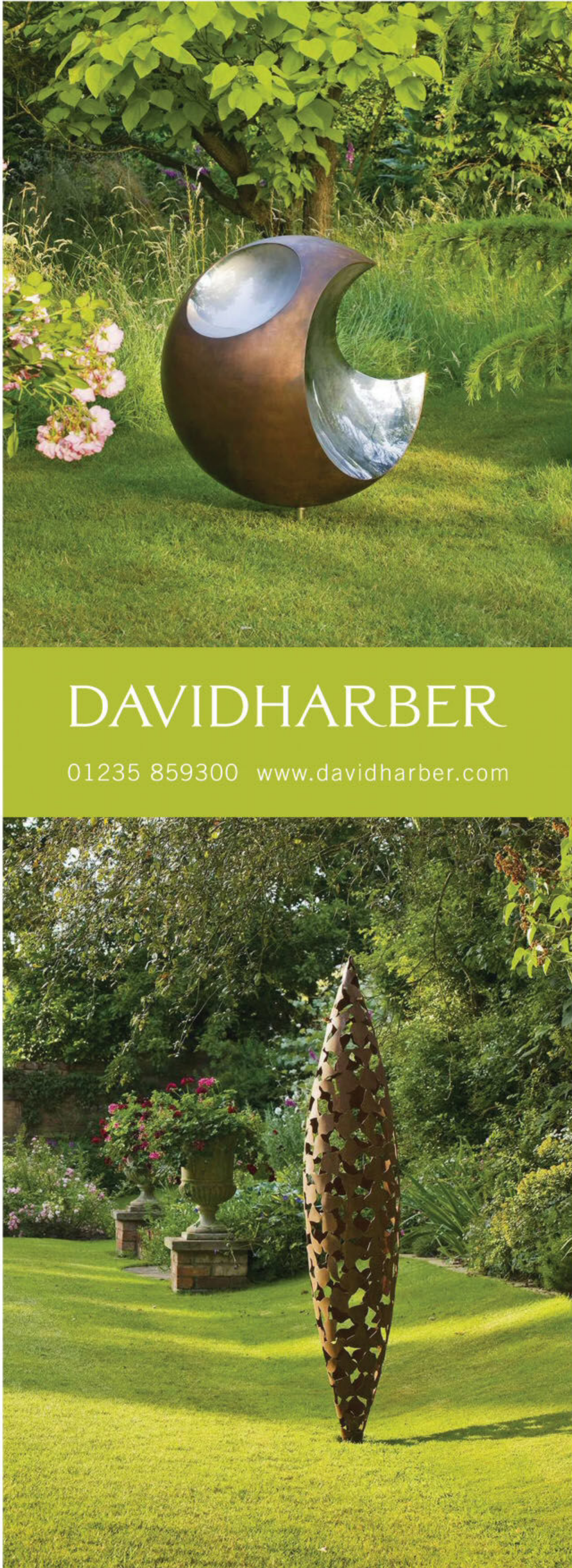

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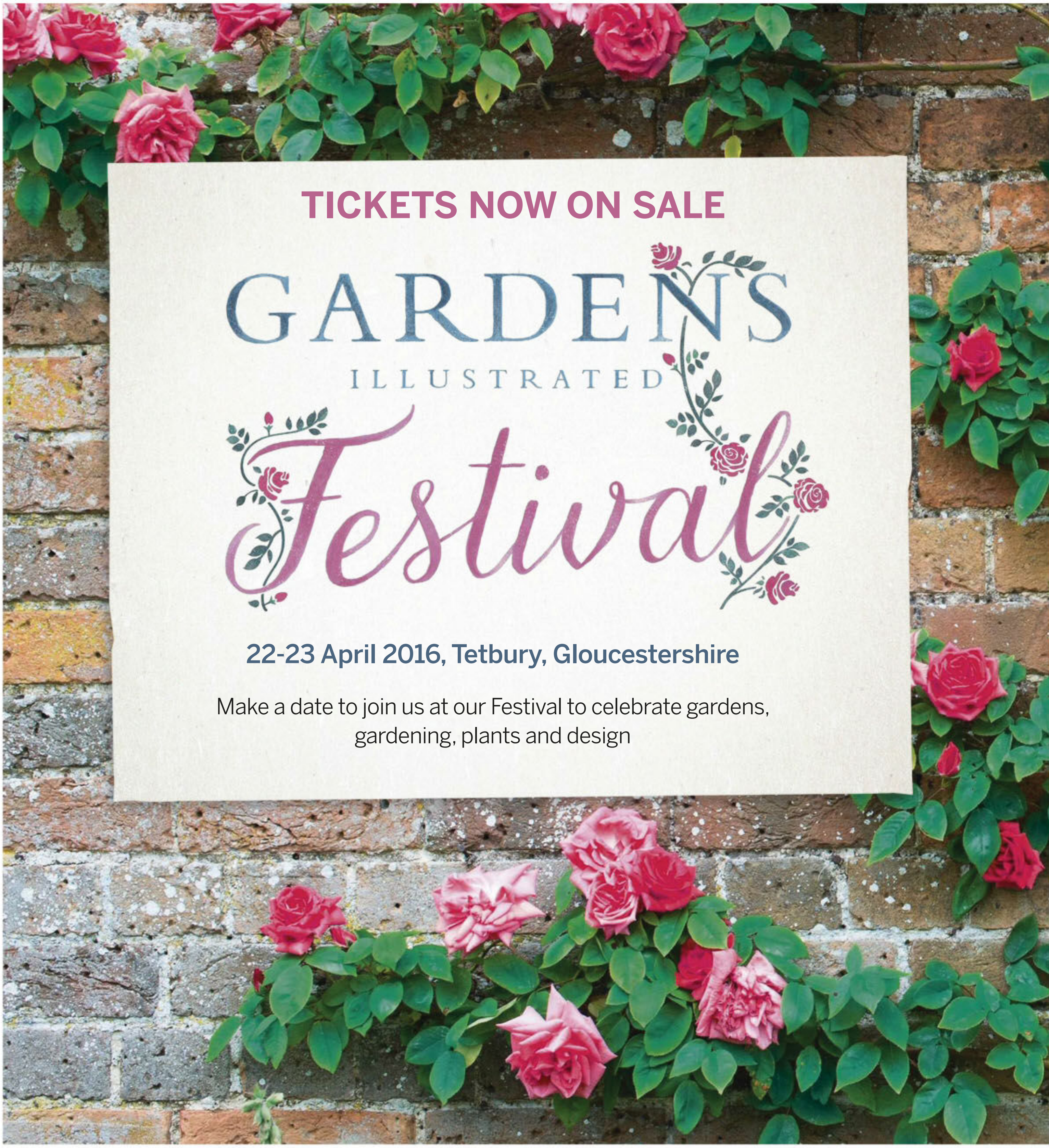
Exclusive Reader Events 2016

***Gardens Illustrated* Festival**
22-23 April 2016 – page 8

***Gardens Illustrated* Talk**
24 May 2016 – page 11



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22-23 April 2016, Tetbury, Gloucestershire

Make a date to join us at our Festival to celebrate gardens, gardening, plants and design

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All
welcome

Join us for the second *Gardens Illustrated* Festival, now in the beautiful Cotswold town of Tetbury. Taking place over the weekend of 22-23 April 2016, the festival will once again gather together an eclectic and exciting line-up of speakers – offering a fascinating programme of talks on a range of horticultural topics.

Building on the success of last year's event, we have moved location from Malmesbury to the nearby and the equally charming Cotswold town of Tetbury, allowing for more festival activities in one place. Alongside the talks there will be a marquee selling a fine selection of plants and gardening goods from some of our favourite companies and artisan makers. You'll also find freshly made teas, coffees and lunches, as well as our garden plant and design clinic offering individual advice.

We'll also be organising tours of local gardens, including the Arts and Crafts delight, Rodmarton Manor with fine topiary and herbaceous plantings.

Confirmed speakers for 2016 include: Arne Maynard, Cleve West, Roy Lancaster, Tim Richardson, Mark Diacono, James Alexander-Sinclair, Fergus Garrett, Jinny Blom, Carol Klein, Helen Dillon, Troy Scott Smith, Val Bourne, Matthew Wilson, Marina Christopher, Chris Beardshaw and Charles Dowding.

To find out more about the event and book tickets go to

gardensfestival.com

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TIM GAINEY / ALAMY; 2015 FESTIVAL IMAGES BY JASON INGRAM; PORTRAIT OF HELEN DILLON BY JANE SEBIRE

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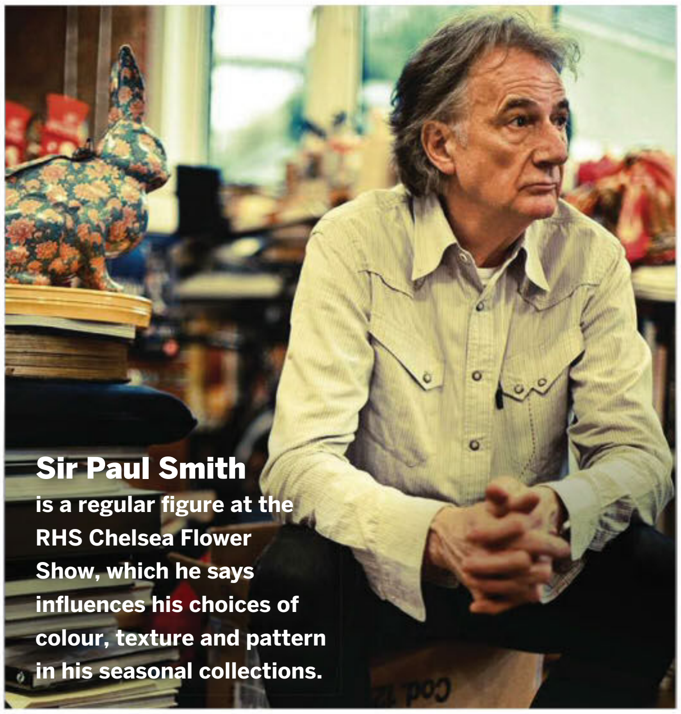

Sir Paul Smith is a regular figure at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, which he says influences his choices of colour, texture and pattern in his seasonal collections.

Luciano Giubbilei Italian-born Luciano came to England in 1994 to study garden design. His international practice designs gardens characterised by the beauty of their spatial arrangement.

Tuesday 24 May 2016

Gardens Illustrated Talk

Join us at the Royal Geographical Society in London for an inspirational discussion between fashion designer Sir Paul Smith and garden designer Luciano Giubbilei

When Luciano Giubbilei first met world-renowned fashion designer Sir Paul Smith at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2011, it was a meeting that was to set Luciano on a new path in his design career. For our talk Luciano and Sir Paul will look back at the effects of that meeting and explore what for them are key relationships between fashion, plants, flowers and design.

Book now for Standard and Premium tickets. All tickets are allocated seating with Premium ticket holders seated in the front section of the lecture theatre. Premium guests also receive a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne on arrival as well as a *Gardens Illustrated* goody bag.

Talk details

- **Date** Tuesday 24 May 2016.
- **Venue** Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR.

PROGRAMME

- **6pm** Doors open – cash bar available. Premium ticket holders will be served a glass of Laurent-Perrier champagne.
- **7-8.15pm** Talk including Q&A.
- **9pm** Doors close.

TICKETS

- **Subscribers***
  Standard £20; Premium £30.
- **Non-subscribers**
  Standard £25; Premium £35.

All tickets are allocated seating. Premium tickets holders will be seated in the front section of the lecture theatre and offered a glass of Laurent-Perrier and a goody bag.

***To subscribe see page 30.**

Gardens Illustrated reserves the right to replace any of the speakers with other speakers of equal stature in the unlikely event that either of them are unable to attend. Tickets must be booked in advance. Please let us know when booking of any special access requirements. Tickets are non refundable. Driving to the lecture is not advised. Nearest London Underground station is South Kensington.

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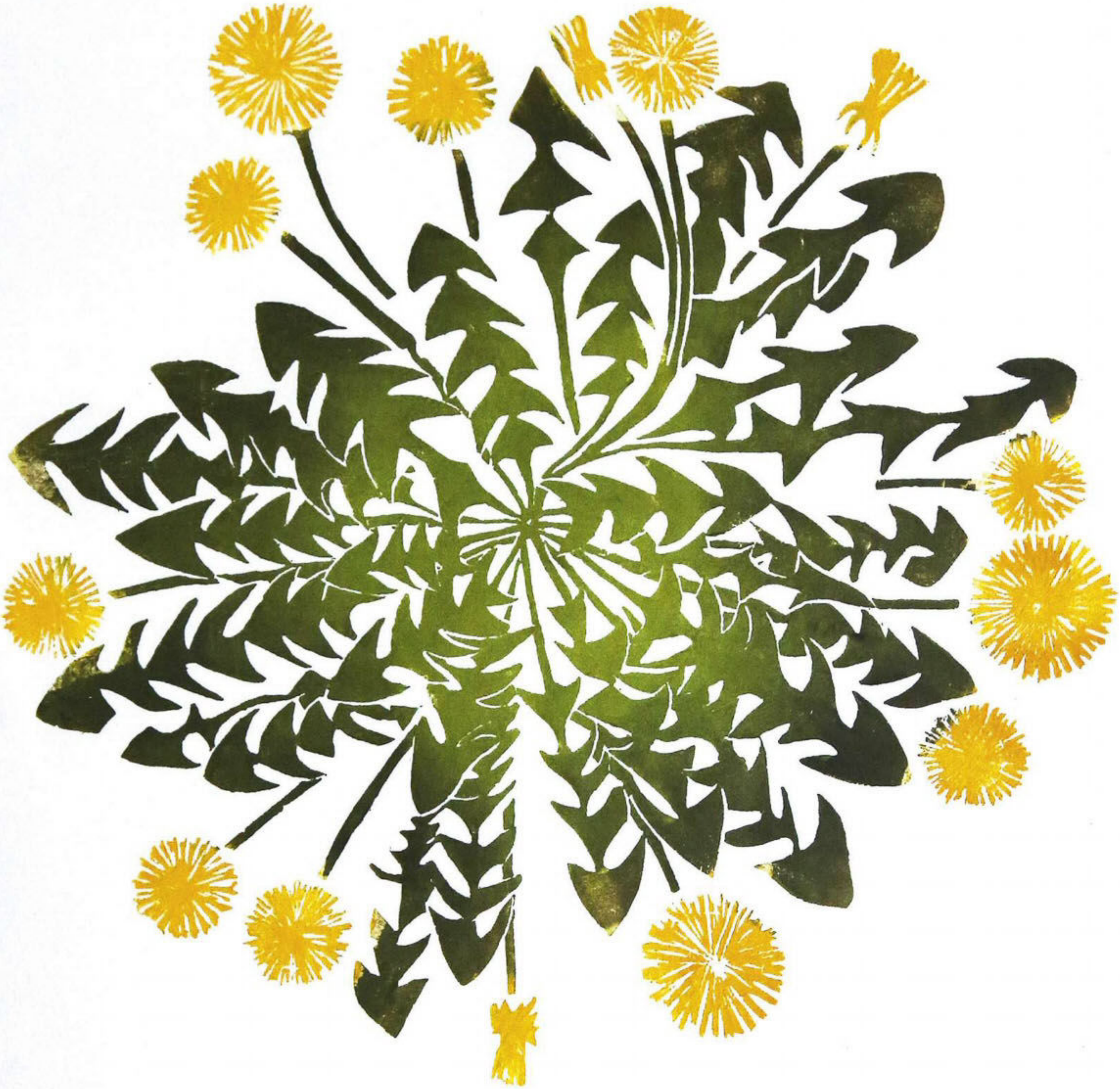
Dig in

What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month

NEWS COMPILED BY ALYS HURN



BOTANICAL PRINT

Fill your home with golden sunshine

Dandelions may not be everyone's favourite flower, but the pesky little lawn spoilers look fabulous in this lino-print from the Irish design and make studio Superfolk. Printed – using Japanese ink – on traditional Japanese washi paper from Awagami Factory in Tokushima, Japan, which has been making washi papers for eight generations, it measures 64 x 45cm and costs €78. **makersandbrothers.com**

NEW SCULPTURES

Blowing in the wind

A series of 12 breathtaking giant dandelion sculptures has been installed at Trentham Gardens in Staffordshire. Created by father and daughter team Robin and Amy Wight, the sculptures, which stand five meters tall with detailed seedheads over a metre wide, will be on permanent display overlooking the lake and wild-flower meadow. Robin is also the artist behind the fairies that populate Trentham's popular Fairy Trail. The Trentham Estate, Stone Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 8AX. **Tel 01782 646646, trentham.co.uk**

LEARNED LECTURES

The University of Oxford Botanic Garden's series of five Winter Lectures kicks off with designer James Alexander-Sinclair discussing a Life in Five Gardens on 28 January. Tickets cost £14 or £54 for all five. Saïd Business School, Oxford. **Tel 01865 286690, botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk**

READER EVENT

Festival tickets on sale

Tickets for the second *Gardens Illustrated* Festival are now on sale. Featuring a stunning line up of speakers, including Roy Lancaster, Carol Klein and Arne Maynard, and stalls from some of the UK's finest specialist nurseries and garden suppliers, the two-day Festival will take place on 22-23 April in the Cotswold town of Tetbury. We'll also be running our popular design clinic and offering tours of local gardens. Tickets for lectures and garden tours are limited, so we advise booking early. **gardensfestival.com**.

Garden shows and festivals 2016

APRIL

2-3 Great Dixter Spring Plant Fair, UK. International specialist nurseries. greatdixter.co.uk

8-10 Les Fêtes des Plantes de Printemps, Château de Saint-Jean de Beauregard, France. Europe's finest nurseries. domsaintjeanbeauregard.com

21-24 Harrogate Flower Show, UK. Celebrating spring planting. flowershow.org.uk

22-23 *Gardens Illustrated* Festival, UK. See above, right. gardensfestival.com

MAY

5-8 RHS Malvern Spring Festival, UK. Show gardens and plants. rhs.org.uk

6-8 Beervelde Garden Days, Belgium. parkvanbeervelde.be

13-15 Les Journées des Plantes, France. Courson, France's premier event, in its new home of Chantilly. domaine-de-courson.fr

24-28 RHS Chelsea Flower Show, UK. The UK's premier garden event. rhs.org.uk

JUNE

2-6 Bloom, Ireland. The largest garden festival in Ireland. bloominthepark.com

3-5 Gardening Scotland, UK. Garden inspiration. gardeningscotland.com

3-5 Holker Garden Festival, UK. Gardens, and crafts. holkerfestival.co.uk

4-5 Bowood House Garden Festival, UK. Plant fair. tobygardenfest.co.uk

17-19 Bingerden International Specialist Nursery Days, the Netherlands. International nurseries. bingerden.com

24-26 Grow London, UK. Urban gardening event. growlondon.com

JULY

5-10 RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show, UK. Show gardens and plants. rhs.co.uk

20-24 RHS Tatton Park Flower Show, UK. rhs.org.uk

SEPTEMBER

23-25 Les Fêtes des Plantes d'Automne, Château de Saint-Jean de Beauregard, France. domsaintjeanbeauregard.com

24-25 Malvern Autumn Show, UK. Autumn planting. rhs.org.uk

RHS London Shades of Autumn Show.

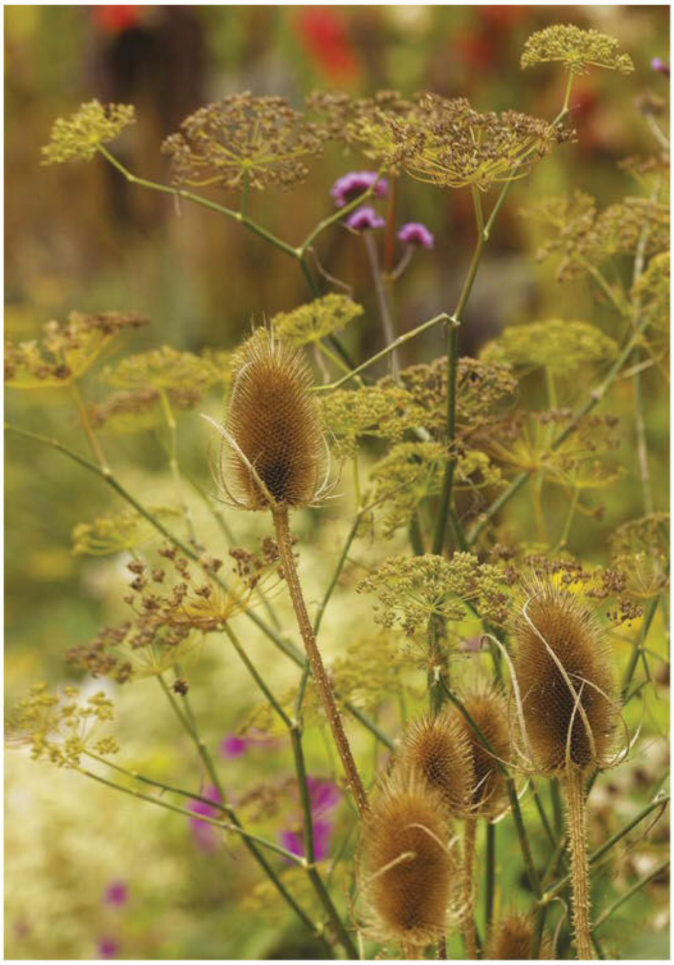
OCTOBER

30 September – 2 October Orticolario, Italy. Garden festival on the shores of Lake Como. orticolario.it

7-9 Beervelde Garden Days, Belgium. parkvanbeervelde.be

28-29 RHS London Shades of Autumn Show, UK. rhs.org.uk

- This is just a selection of events for 2016. See local press and RHS website for more shows. Check all details before travelling.



PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Winning image

Congratulations to Diana Blackwell, the winner of our Reader Day photography competition. Diana's image of fennel and teasels (above) was taken on our photography workshop in October, which offered readers the chance to learn tips and techniques from garden photographer Jason Ingram. Jason, who with editor Juliet Roberts selected the winner from 24 entrants, described Diana's image as: 'A really beautifully composed plant combination. Focusing on the teasel, gives the image real structure against such a painterly background'. View a gallery of all entries at **gardensillustrated.com**

ZIZ-ZAG CRAZY

This ingenious hoe has a double-edged cutting blade with a zig-zag design that allows easy movement through the soil. Available with either a long or short ash-wood handle, it's made from high grade stainless steel by Crazy Horse Tools, a new company based in Cumbria, by skilled, local craftsman. Prices start at £43.30, ***crazyhorsetools.co.uk***

Diary

Discover the magic of hellebores at Ashwood Nurseries.

- **Woodcraft Weekend**

Wood turning and lovespoon carving are just two of the traditional crafts on display. 16-17 January. £2. National Botanic Garden of Wales, Middleton Hall, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire SA32 8HN. Tel 01558 667149, gardensofwales.org.uk

- **Introduction to Birdwatching**

Discover more about the huge variety of birds found on the beautiful shores of Loch Leven, in the company of expert Scott Paterson. 20 January, 10am-4pm. RSPB Members £35, non members £45. RSPB Loch Leven Centre, Loch Leven Reserve, Kinross KY13 9LX. Tel 01577 862355, rspb.org.uk

- **Winter Shrub Pruning Waterperry Gardens**

Learn how to prune and train shrubs and roses at the renowned garden school. 23 January, 10am-3.30pm. £55. Waterperry Gardens, nr Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ. Tel 01844 339254, waterperrygardens.co.uk

- **Flower arranging at Covent Garden**

Take a guided tour of the New Covent Garden Flower Market before enjoying a one-day course on how to arrange flowers into hand-tied bouquets. Flowers and materials included. 30 January, 8am-4pm. £240. The Covent Garden Academy of Flowers, St Martin's Courtyard, 9 Slingsby Place, London WC2E 9AB. Tel 020 7240 6359, academyofflowers.com.

- **Ashwood Nurseries RHS Lecture and Garden Tour**

Discover The World of Hellebores at Ashwood Nurseries and take a tour of owner John Massey's private garden. Tea or coffee and home-made cake included. 26 January, 11am. RHS members £15.50, non members £18.50. Tel 01384 401996, ashwoodnurseries.com

Wave Hill Lecture Series

The New York School of Interior Design is hosting a series of horticultural lectures on behalf of cultural centre Wave Hill. The series begins with a talk by Quill Teal-Sullivan, garden manager of Meadowburn Farm, on the legacy of writer Helena Rutherfurd Ely, who helped bring the historic gardens at Meadowburn back to life. 20 January, 6-7.30pm. New York School of Interior Design, 170 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021, USA. Tel +1 718 549 3200, wavehill.org

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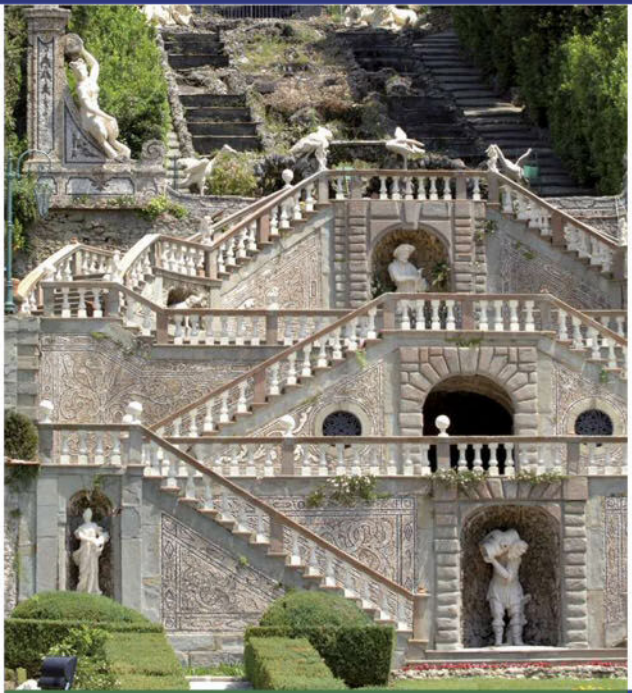

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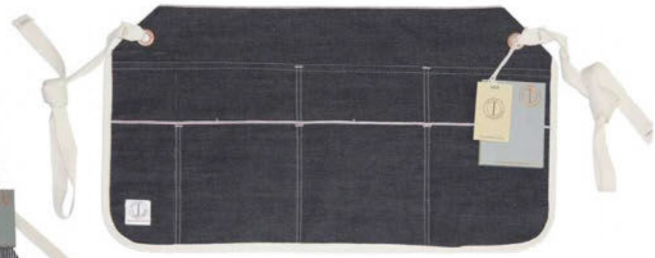

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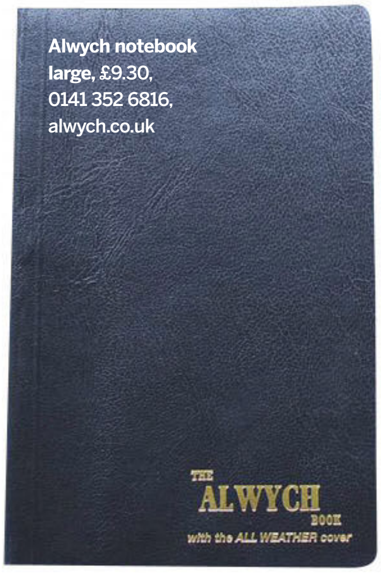

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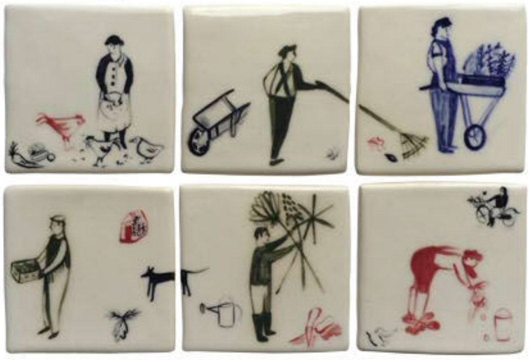

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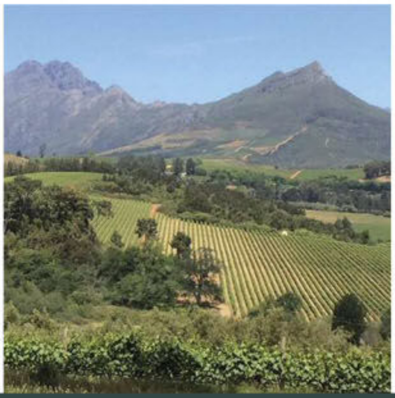

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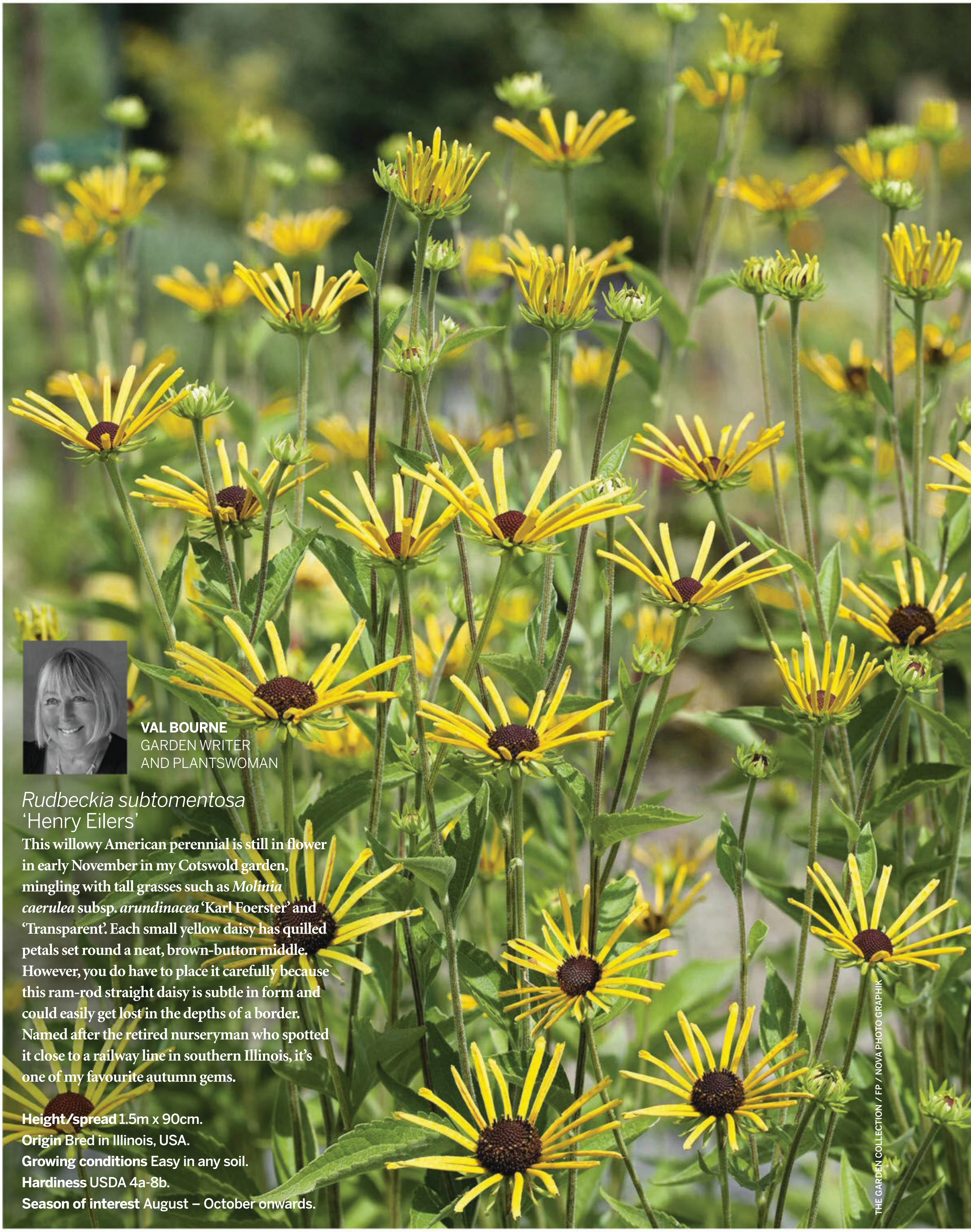


VAL BOURNE
GARDEN WRITER
AND PLANTSWOMAN

Rudbeckia subtomentosa 'Henry Eilers'

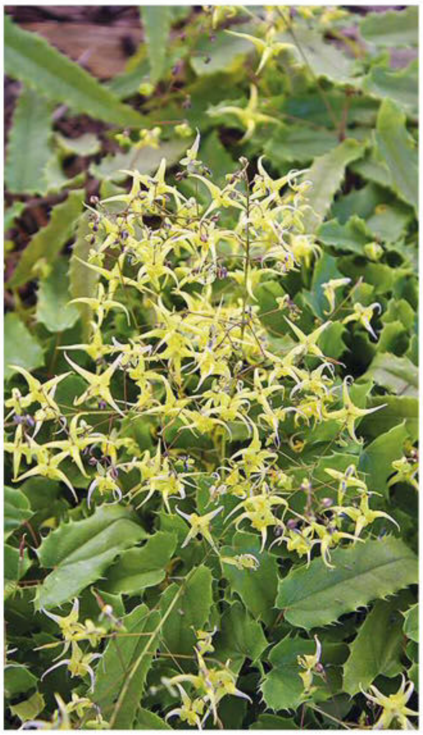
This willowy American perennial is still in flower in early November in my Cotswold garden, mingling with tall grasses such as *Molinia caerulea* subsp. *arundinacea* 'Karl Foerster' and 'Transparent'. Each small yellow daisy has quilled petals set round a neat, brown-button middle. However, you do have to place it carefully because this ram-rod straight daisy is subtle in form and could easily get lost in the depths of a border. Named after the retired nurseryman who spotted it close to a railway line in southern Illinois, it's one of my favourite autumn gems.

Height/spread 1.5m x 90cm.
Origin Bred in Illinois, USA.
Growing conditions Easy in any soil.
Hardiness USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest August – October onwards.

THE GARDEN COLLECTION / FP / NOVA PHOTO GRAPHIK

Top plants for 2016

With so many plants to choose from – and never a big enough garden – how do you choose which plants to grow? We asked ten experts what's on their plant list this year



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DERRY WATKINS
NURSERYWOMAN,
SPECIAL PLANTS

Epimedium 'Spine Tingler'

One of my favourite new epimediums. The evergreen leaves are almost serrated, a bit like long holly leaves, but thinner. Its airy, yellow flowers, produced in early spring are only a side show. The real glory of the plant is that every young leaf is a tender, nearly translucent, deep red. And it carries on making the occasional red young leaf throughout the summer.

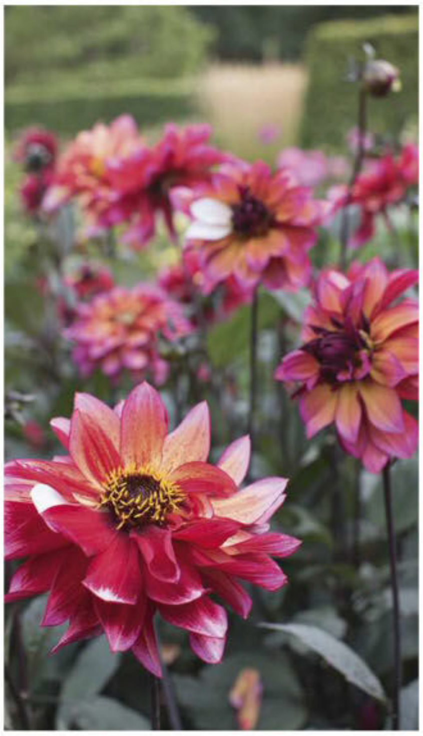
Height/spread 30 x 60cm.
Origin China, collected by Darrell Probst.
Growing conditions Light shade, good soil.
Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 5.
Season of interest Year round.

SARAH RAVEN
WRITER, GARDENER
AND PLANTSWOMAN

Dahlia 'Darkarin'

I've been trialling this dahlia in my cutting bed and it's the most beautiful cultivar with the appearance of dark-pink velvet brushed with gold leaf. I want to plant in a bold clump in our oast garden, and I want it for our large pots mixed with the *Panicum* 'Frosted Explosion' and green *Atriplex*, which has great, late-season seedpods.

Height 80cm.
Origin Bred in the Netherlands.
Growing conditions Full sun in moist but well-drained soil.
Hardiness USDA 7a-10b.
Season of interest July – November.



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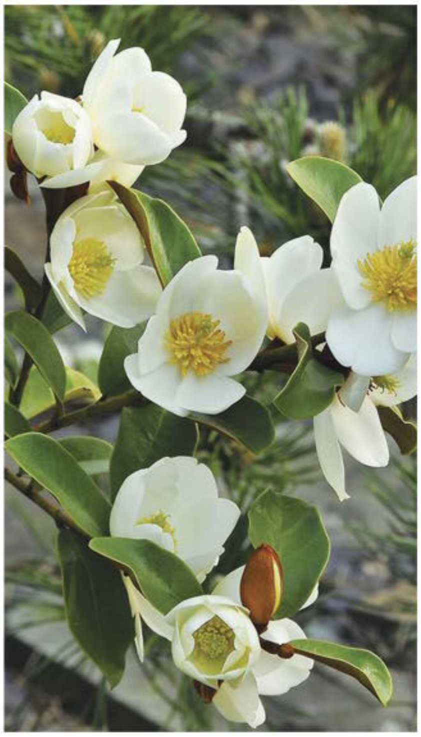

JOHN MASSEY

JOHN MASSEY
NURSERY OWNER,
ASHWOOD NURSERIES

Magnolia laevifolia 'Gail's Favourite'

Velvety, bronze, furry buds open in spring, to elegant, cup-shaped, pure-white flowers with a central boss of yellow stamens, and a delicate fragrance. The small, evergreen foliage has velvety brown indumentum on the underside. Deep-pink seedpods open to reveal glossy, crimson fruit in autumn.

Height Up to 2m in ten years.
Origin China.
Growing conditions Sunny, sheltered position, in free-draining, neutral or acid soil.
Hardiness USDA 7a-10b.
Season of interest April/May for flowers.

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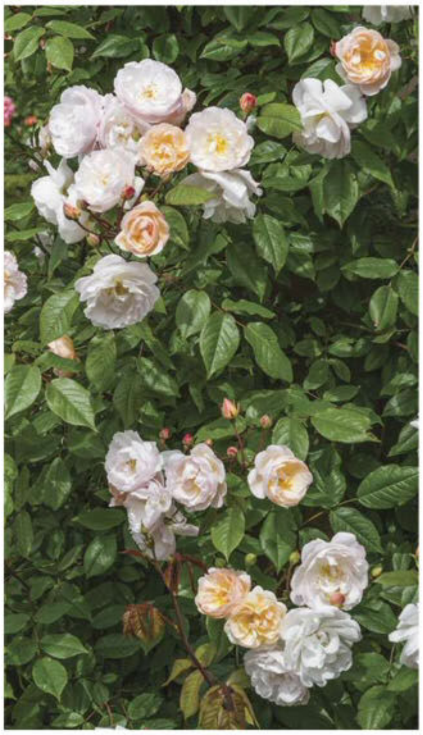
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.



DAVID AUSTIN ROSES

MICHAEL MARRIOTT

ROSE EXPERT,
DAVID AUSTIN ROSES

Rosa The Lady of the Lake (= 'Ausherbert')

You normally think of ramblers as being great monstrous things but this one is more moderate and has the advantage of repeat flowering. The flowers are very pretty with a fresh, citrus fragrance. Very healthy and perfect for an arch or trained against a wall.

Height Up to 4m.
Origin One of the English Roses from David Austin Roses.
Growing conditions Any reasonable soil in sun or partial shade.
Season of interest Most of the time from June through to October.

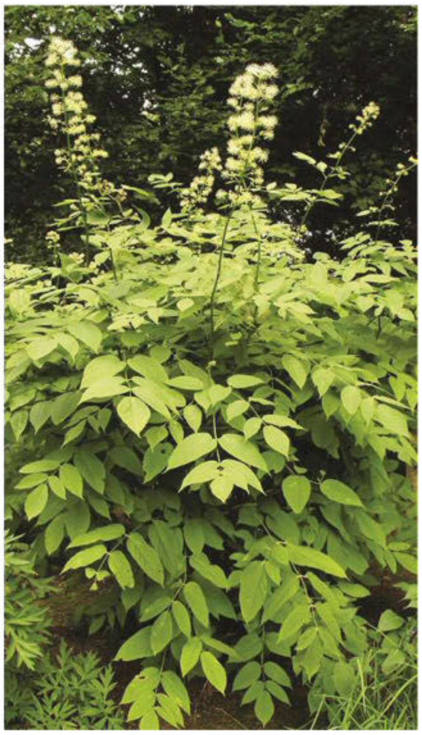
BLEDDYN WYNN-JONES

CRÛG FARM PLANTS

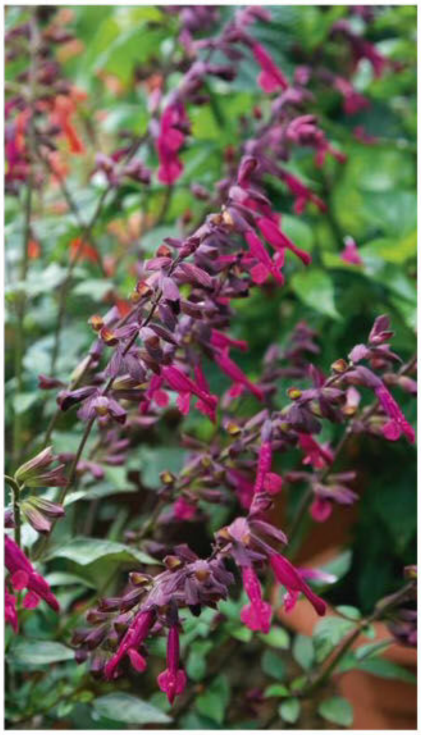
Aralia cordata

A real wow of a plant; it emerges in spring innocently enough, slowly expanding its stout, dark stems skyward. These are well-clothed by potentially huge compound leaves up to 2m long composed of paddle-shaped leaflets. By July, flower stems add another 1.5m in height holding aloft racemes of small, greeny-white flowers.

Height 3-4m.
Origin Cool Japanese forests.
Growing conditions Humus-rich soil in shade or part shade.
Hardiness USDA 4a-8b.
Season of interest Spring – autumn.



CRÛG FARM PLANTS



REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

HELEN DILLON

DUBLIN GARDEN
OWNER, WRITER AND
BROADCASTER

Salvia 'Love and Wishes'

I've been taking cuttings like mad in the greenhouse because I want masses of spares of this sensationally good plant. I couldn't describe this aromatic perennial any better than Dyson's Nurseries' plant list: 'ravishing, reddish-burgundy flowers with dark-purple calyces'. A wonderful, glowing colour with which to illuminate the garden for months.

Height 80cm.
Origin Bred in Australia.
Growing conditions Sun or partial shade, well-drained soil.
Hardiness RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.
Season of interest June – November.

Useful information

Details on how to find the plants chosen by our plantspeople this year – and more about their work.

For suppliers of each of these plants, it is best to check the ***RHS Plant Finder* or the website apps.rhs.org.uk/horticulturaldatabase/index.asp**

Alternatively, many of the plantspeople featured also have nurseries, so it is always worth trying these, or visiting the gardens they work in.

Please note that stocks of some of the newer plant cultivars may be limited.

Ashwood Nurseries

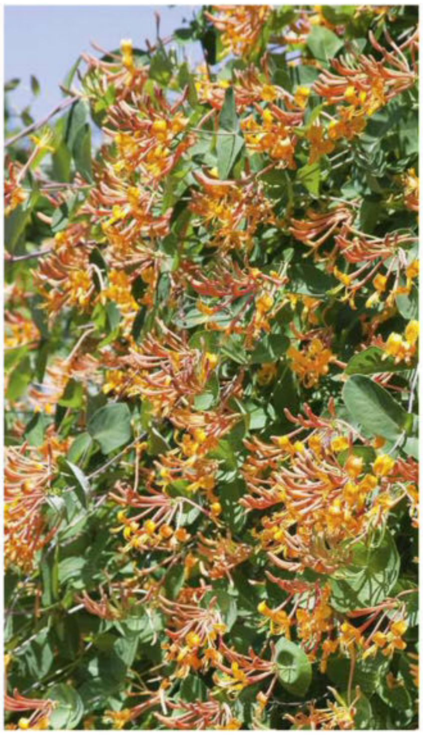
- As a nurseryman and gardener, **Adrian Bloom** has been behind a number of popular plant introductions including *Geranium* 'Rozanne'. He has recently received the Garden Media Guild's Lifetime Achievement Award. bloomsofbressinghamplants.com
- **Ashwood Nurseries** Ashwood Lower Lane, Ashwood, Kingswinford,

ROY LANCASTER
PLANTSMAN AND GARDEN WRITER

Lonicera 'Mandarin'

This hardy honeysuckle may not have a noticeable scent but the fiery-orange flowers through summer smother the branches and dazzle the eyes. A twining scrambler or climber, it can be trained on supporting wires or over a tripod. It has purple young growth and copper-tinted, young leaves plus terminal clusters of tubular vivid-orange flowers, red-tinted in bud. AGM*.

Height 5m.
Origin Bred in Vancouver, Canada.
Growing conditions Best in full sun, any soil.
Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.
Season of interest May through summer.



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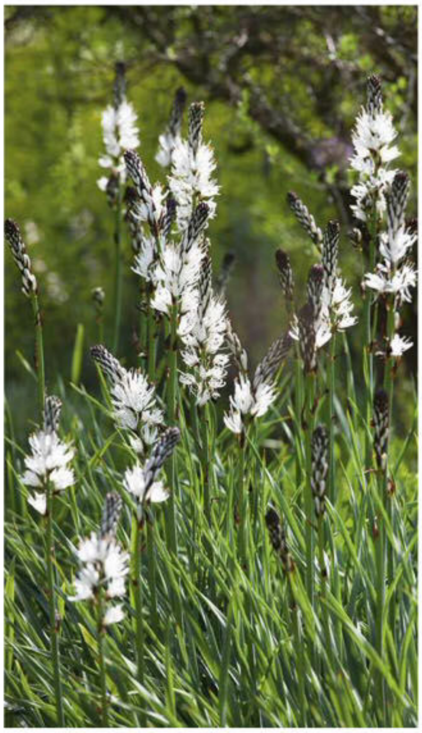

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LADY SKELMERSDALE
NURSERYWOMAN, BROADLEIGH GARDENS

Asphodelus albus

This superb perennial deserves to be more widely grown. The tuberous roots, give rise in late autumn to a basal clump of stiff grey leaves. The flower spike erupts in late spring and flowers for a good six weeks. The stiff, 90cm stems are smothered in large, starry white flowers, each with a brown lateral stripe. Once flowered it rapidly goes dormant. Can be grown from seed.

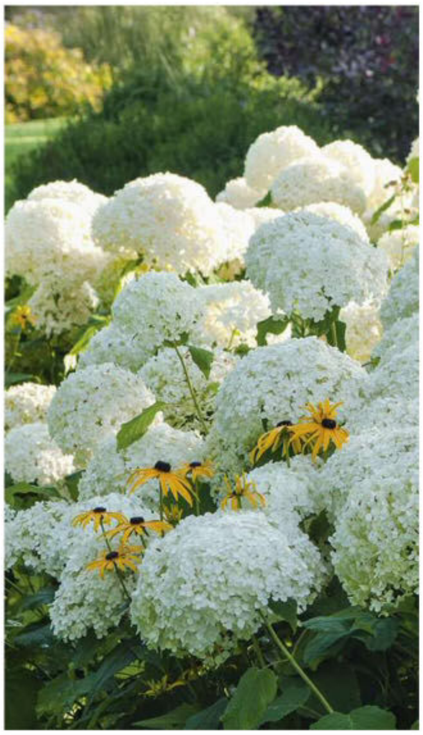
Height/spread 90 x 60cm.
Origin Mediterranean.
Growing conditions Sun, well-drained soil.
Hardiness RHS H4, USDA 6a-8b.
Season of interest Summer.

ADRIAN BLOOM
NURSERYMAN AND HORTICULTURIST

Hydrangea arborescens 'Annabelle'

This easy-to-grow shrub can be treated like a perennial: prune to the ground in early spring and you'll get multiple branches, each terminating in heads of lime-green petals in midsummer, dramatically expanding to large, rounded heads of brilliant white. Enjoy the dried heads into winter. AGM.

Height/spread 90cm x 1.2m.
Origin Eastern USA.
Growing conditions Moist but well-drained soil, in full sun or part shade.
Hardiness RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.
Season of interest Midsummer to October.



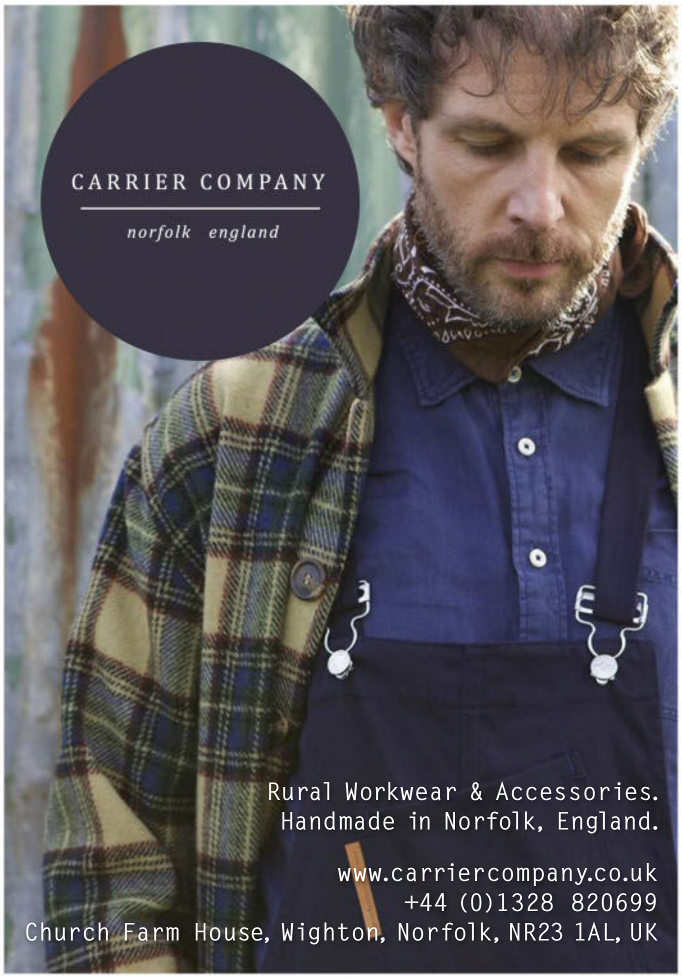
RICHARD BLOOM

West Midlands DY6 0AE. Tel 01384 401996, ashwoodnurseries.com

- **Val Bourne** is speaking at the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival** (details on page 8). valbourne.co.uk
- **Broadleigh Gardens** Barr House, Bishops Hull, Taunton, Somerset TA4 1AE. Tel 01823 286231, broadleighbulbs.co.uk
- **Crûg Farm Plants** Griffith's Crossing, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL55 1TU. Tel 01248 670232, crug-farm.co.uk
- **David Austin Roses** Bowling Green Lane, Albrighton, Wolverhampton WV7 3HB. Tel 01902 376300, davidaustinroses.co.uk
- **The Dillon Garden** 45 Sandford Terrace, Ranelagh, Dublin 6, Ireland. dillongarden.com. Helen is speaking at the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival** (details on page 8).
- Writer and plant expert **Roy Lancaster** is speaking at the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival** (details on page 8).
- **Sarah Raven** Tel 0345 092 0283, sarahraven.com
- **Special Plants Nursery** Greenways Lane, Cold Ashton, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 8LA. Tel 01225 891686, specialplants.net

David Austin Roses.

DAVID AUSTIN ROSES



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IN
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GaRDEN

Keeping a written record of your garden brings many rewards, so why not make this New Year's resolution a promise to start a garden journal?

WORDS JOJO TULLOH ILLUSTRATIONS SARAH YOUNG

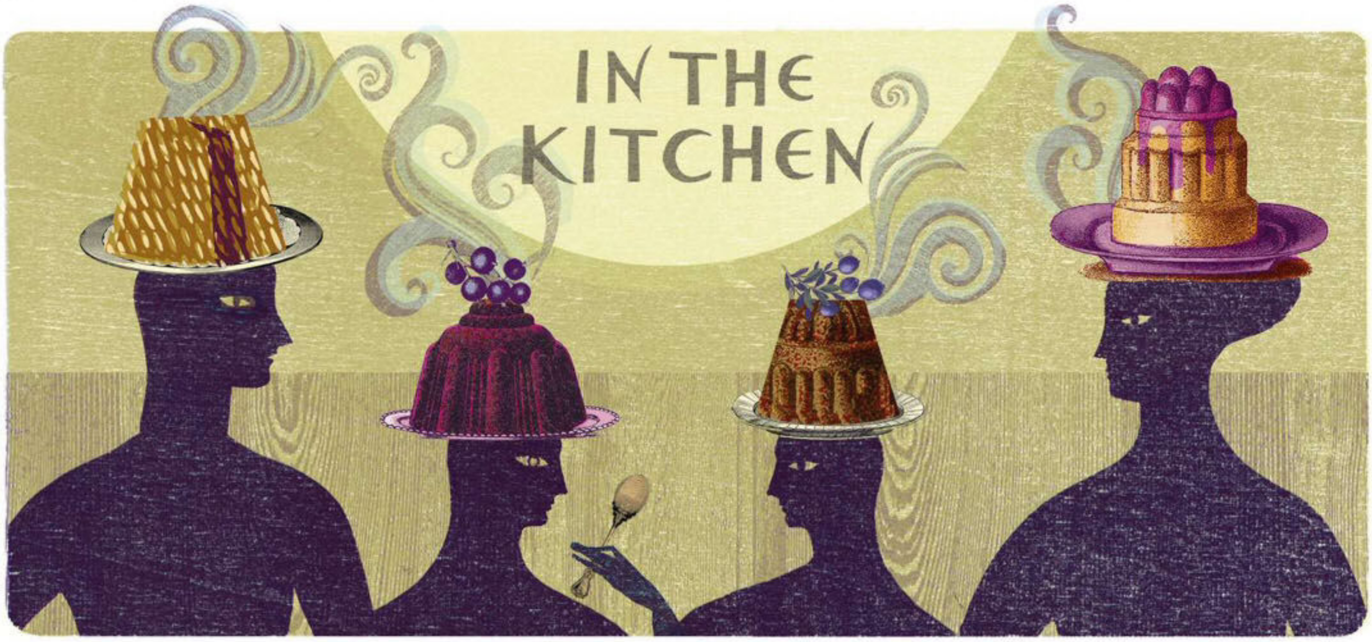
The American author Joan Didion wrote a famous essay titled 'On Keeping a Notebook'. The notebooks she described were not for public consumption; they were 'about the bits of the mind's string too short to us'. Taking note is a habit worth catching. I've never got on with diaries but I do keep two unruled notebooks, one for everyday use and one for the garden. If I can record the name of a plant, a description of a memorable dish, a quote that seems to get to the heart of things, a planting combination worth remembering or even an interesting snatch of conversation overheard, I feel better. You may have no ambition to be a writer, but if you have a garden then do keep a journal. Write down not just what you did and when, but what caught your eye or made you think, and you may find that keeping a record adds another dimension to your life as a gardener.

The discipline comes from trying to remember those small moments, whether of pleasure or despair. I have had some bad experiences with wet and muddy notebooks so now I wait until I'm home from the allotment before I start writing. You don't have to write much but try not to leave it too long between entries. Everything can go into the same book: ideas gleaned from other people's gardens, planting plans, lists of seeds bought and the menus you devise from your own crops. A record of the ever-changing weather and its effect, whether detrimental or positive, will also prove useful. It's amazing the things I forget – the beauty of lime-green dill flowers against the silver metal of a cardoon leaf or the blackcurrant leaves used to flavour custard. Even if you have no great faith in your abilities as a writer you will be surprised how much a record gives back; even a single sentence can trick the mind's eye into seeing in full colour once again.

We have a long and honourable tradition of keeping nature journals in this country, from Gilbert White's *The Natural History of Selborne* to Derek Jarman's *Modern Nature*, so now is the time to get reading and writing. Moleskine does a gardening journal split into sections to help you organise your horticultural life (planting, plans, inspiration). If you think you need a spur, then why not borrow the idea behind the book *Dear Friend and Gardener* by Beth Chatto and Christopher Lloyd and write a letter to a gardening friend about what's happening in your garden? When they reply you write back. The need to have something to write about will urge you on to greater feats of observation and reflection. ▷

WHAT TO DO NOW

- Now, when plants are dormant, is a good time to expand or refresh your soft fruit by taking hardwood cuttings (you can do this with currants, gooseberry, mulberry, fig and vines). Choose healthy shoots that have grown this year and cut into 15-30cm sections. At the top, make a sloping cut above a bud so water can run off. Cut straight across the bottom.
- To help with rooting organic gardeners can use a homemade willow tea. The sappy growth of willows contains indolebutyric acid (IBA), a plant hormone that stimulates root growth (an active ingredient in hormone rooting powder). It's easy to make: deleaf and cut the sappy spring growth of any willow into 3cm pieces and soak for four days, or pour boiling water over and steep overnight, then strain. Stand your fruit cuttings in a bucket of the willow tea overnight before planting. To plant out, allow 10-15cm between cuttings and 40cm between trenches. For gooseberry bushes (single stem) leave only one bud above ground, or rub off surplus buds. Keep an eye on the trench, firming back as needed and make sure it doesn't dry out over the summer. Water once or twice during the growing season with willow tea.



The kitchen garden cooks of the past had many recipes that could be adapted as different fruits came into season. One of these was the fruit hat, a steamed pudding with a suet crust filled with layers of fruit and sugar. Eliza Acton and Mrs Beeton both offer variations on this theme, with recipes for plum, apple, damsons, cherries and blackcurrant hats. They are enormously filling and that, combined with a cooking time that is enjoyably elastic, makes them a wonderful way of feeding a crowd (especially if you're not quite sure what time dinner is). They make perfect food for hard-working gardeners. I ate my first steamed pudding (chocolate) at Great Dixter after a morning's volunteer gardening, spent hacking away at bamboo. During winter the cooking of steamed puddings has another advantage: the steamy aromatic vapours that waft around the house are the best kind of aromatherapy.

I freeze a lot of my home-grown fruit and was happy to find a bag of gooseberries at the back of the drawer when rummaging for a joint of pork. I used them to make a fruit hat – cooked for three hours, the sour berries and brown sugar collapsed into a glorious melting mixture. If you don't have any frozen fruit, then use cooking apples (you want the kind that will become fondant when cooked). Or, with Seville oranges in season, you could also encase an entire orange in the centre and fill up with sugar and chunks of butter (about 100g).

For the pastry use 275g self-raising flour, one teaspoon baking powder, 120g suet and 150ml of cold water. Combine the dry ingredients with a pinch of salt. Slowly pour in the cold water, using the tips of your fingers to draw the mixture together. Knead gently to make a soft dough (add a little more water if needed). Roll out on a floured board to 4mm thick and cut a quarter for the lid. Butter a one-litre pudding basin and line with the pastry, leaving a little hanging over the sides.

For the apple filling use 450g cooking apples, peeled, cored and sliced, two tablespoons of brown sugar and a strip of lemon peel. Put the apple in layers adding the sugar and lemon peel as you go. For the lid, cut a circle out of the remaining pastry, brush the edges of the pastry with water and pinch the edges shut. Cover the top of the pudding with tin foil (with a pleat in the middle) and tie securely with string.

Place on a tea towel or trivet in a large pan and fill up half way with boiling water. Cover and steam for three hours (a little longer does not matter), topping up with boiling water as you go. Serve with cream and brown sugar. Use this basic recipe for other fruit hats. ◻

USEFUL COOKERY TECHNIQUE

No.1 *Blanching*

Many vegetables benefit from an initial plunge into a large pan of boiling, salted water (for two to three minutes) and then being refreshed very briefly in very cold water. This helps fix colour and partially cook.

RECIPES

Pumpkin and turmeric soup

I made this soup for a friend recovering from surgery – when your appetite is small every mouthful counts. In the depths of winter you need food that fortifies, and this is an invigorating and very flavoursome soup. Pumpkin plus turmeric makes for a deep orange colour with a citrus tang that is the perfect antidote to grey skies. Fresh ginger and turmeric have all sorts of health benefits to give you a boost, and both can be readily found in Indian grocers.

You will need: **1 medium onion, 1 sweet potato (about 400g), 1 slice of pumpkin (about 500g), 4 carrots, 1tbsp each of butter and olive oil, a thumb of ginger, peeled and grated, a 5cm piece of fresh turmeric, peeled and finely grated (or ½tsp powdered turmeric), a squeeze of lime** and **fresh coriander** (optional).

Peel and slice the onion, heat the fats in pan and sweat the onion gently until soft (about ten minutes). Add the grated rhizomes and cook for a minute before adding the peeled and chopped vegetables and a good pinch of salt. Cover the pot and sweat very gently for ten minutes, stirring occasionally. Cover the vegetables with hot water and simmer until soft. Blend until smooth. Taste and adjust the seasoning and serve with a squeeze of lime and a little chopped coriander if you like.

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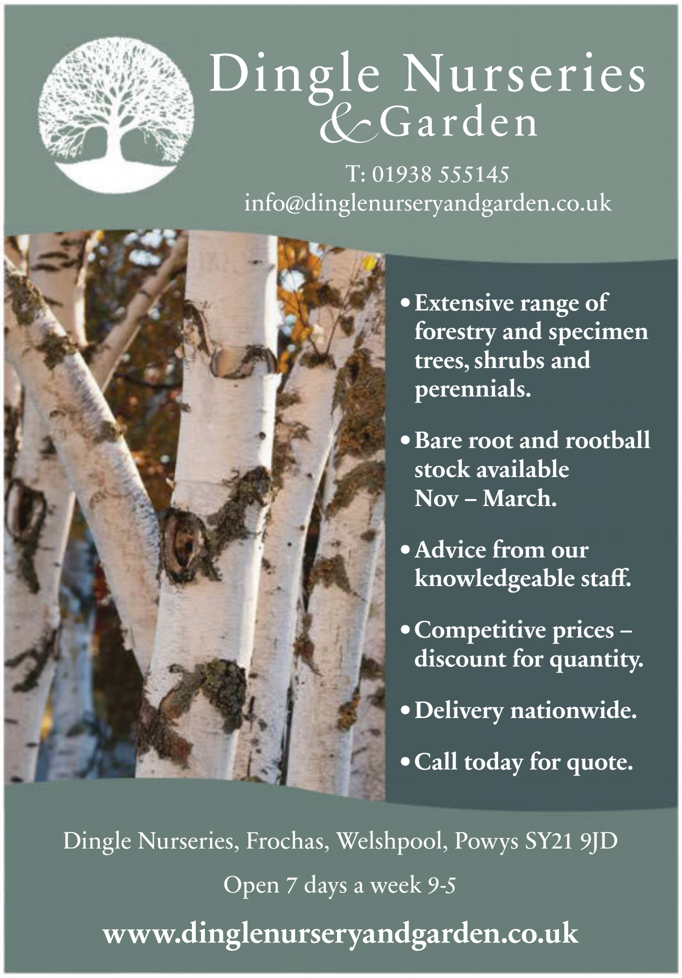

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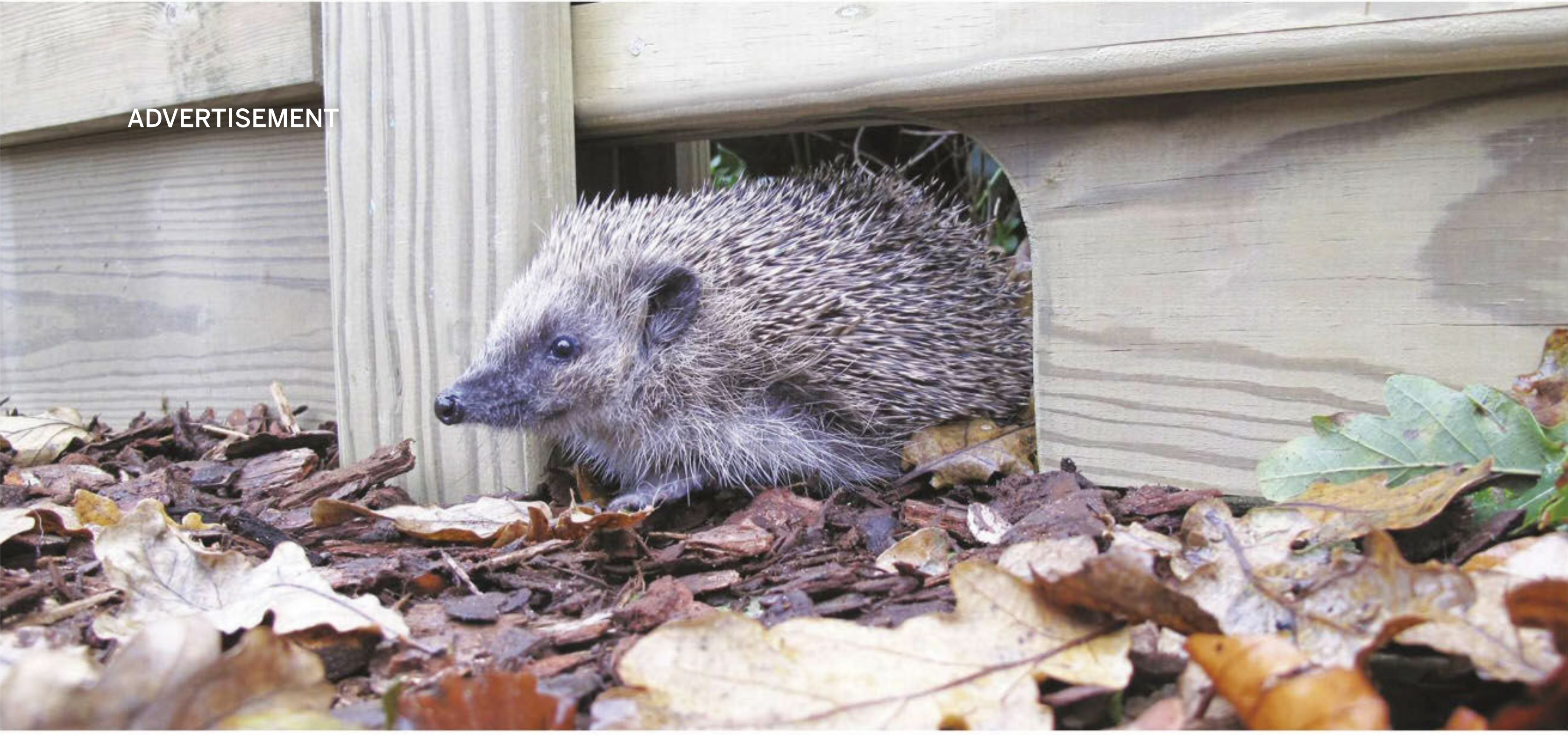

The new hedgehog friendly gravelboard from Jacksons will help our prickly friends to roam from garden to garden to forage more easily, keeping off the roads. Find full details on these and all our **25 year Jakcure guaranteed** products by going to your dedicated page **www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk/lifestyle**

Jacksons Fencing

Giving hedgehogs a helpful hole...

I think you must have been completely out of circulation recently, not to have heard about the plight of the humble hedgehog. These appealing little chaps, who are commonly considered the gardener's friend because they feed on some of the pests in the garden, have suffered a severe decline in numbers. The current population is estimated to be around 25% down in the last decade, which may mean there is only a million or so left.

This may be caused by a reduction in their natural habitat, the countryside. Which means more of them are resorting to living in towns, where unfortunately a whole raft of new threats exists. The most obvious is getting run over by vehicles - possibly 50,000 come to grief on roads. We all know that the hedgehog's first defence mechanism is to curl up, so they present a prickly ball, not many predators will find an attractive proposition. Sadly this doesn't work in any way to deter cars, they just squash them!

The list of bad stuff that can happen to hedgies (as I like to call them) is lengthy: many drown in garden ponds because we don't think of putting something in there to help any hapless creatures climb out. They are also poisoned by careless gardeners who still haven't cottoned on to the fact that slugs eat slug pellets, slugs are then eaten by hedgehogs, then hedgehogs die a very nasty death from poison!

The list continues with getting trapped in netting, which can result in horrific injuries when they try to escape, being burnt in bonfires that seem to be a nice place to make home, until it is set on fire, and apparently strimming accidents are fairly common too.

So what can we do to help? We can avoid leaving netting around for them to get caught in, also check carefully before strimming that there aren't any animals that will get hurt when you let rip with the machine, and check the bonfire hasn't become a hedgie hotel. If you have to use slug pellets, please find a wildlife friendly version that isn't going to harm any animals.

If you are of a kind nature you could try feeding them a little cat food and please don't forget the water.

Hedgehogs used to be able to move much more freely between gardens, finding a variety of locations to feed and make a home. Nowadays we are all a lot keener on fencing in our properties, and sturdy gravelboards at the bottom of fence panels probably have put an abrupt stop to many an established hedgie run.

Here at Jacksons we've tried to find a way to help our spiky friends, we've created the hedgehog friendly gravelboard. It is the same as a normal gravelboard, but it has a hole at one end, large enough to allow them free passage, with a reinforcing strip along the top of the board to ensure it isn't weakened by the hole.

It may seem a small and simple move on our part to try to redress the balance. We know there will probably only be a small percentage of our customers that will opt for installing one of these boards in their fence run, but it will give us, as a company, the chance to talk about the hedgehog decline to our customers and anyone else who will listen. The sincere hope is that it will help to make a difference.

One last word to the dissenters, who immediately shout out that having a hole in the gravelboard will encourage rats. My response is, if you've got rats, a gravelboard will not deter them. They are prolific climbers and they have a special squishy skeleton (there is a scientific name for this, but I refuse to look it up!) the flexibility of their bone structure allows them to squeeze through unfeasibly sized cracks, so a gravelboard won't put them off, they will simply climb over the fence, or burrow under!

louise@jacksons-fencing.co.uk

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Special thanks to all at **www.lordwhisky.co.uk** for their help with the hedgehog photo shoot and for the amazing rescue work they do.

For info on any of Jacksons products or brochures please call **0800 408 4733** to talk to your local Jacksons Fencing Centre.

Rowan Blaik

As head gardener at Down House, once home to the naturalist Charles Darwin, Rowan not only cares for the garden but also recreates some of Darwin's plant experiments

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

First plant love Growing seedlings in modules in the back garden of my childhood home. I loved the variation in the plants I grew. I soon took over most of the regular gardening tasks, staying outside until sunset.

Who has inspired your career the most? I'm lucky to have worked with some very supportive organisations (Royal Parks, RBG Kew and English Heritage). I've been mentored by many outstanding colleagues over the years, each encouraging me to take the next step.

Horticultural heroes Maybe less horticultural, but William H Whyte, the urbanist, with his methodological way of looking at how people interact with the urban landscape around them.

Favourite landscape that has influenced you I'm a modernist at heart, so I would say the water gardens of the Barbican Centre in London, Parc Diderot in Paris, and Erholungspark Marzahn in Berlin.

Three worthwhile tips Don't be shy in asking a horticulturist to show you around their garden. It's the best way to visit a garden. When pruning, look at the 'body language' of plants – they're often communicating exactly how they should be pruned. Don't be afraid of technology in the garden. Alerts from a web-enabled glasshouse thermometer has saved our tender plants several times over.

Most valuable training Most of my horticultural training has been as an apprentice or working student. The hands-on experience and confidence that learning through work offers is invaluable. Recently, I took part in the NERC London Environmental Challenge – working with PhD students in a multidisciplinary course. It was a real eye-opener to see their approach to solving shared environmental issues.

What principles guide your attitude to horticulture? To try to help others in the industry and to promote professional horticulture. Although it's great that Britain is a 'nation of gardeners' the number of times I've had to bite my tongue when I tell people I'm a head gardener and they reply 'oh, I have a garden too'. I've now made it a rule to describe myself as a horticulturist.

Favourite gardening blogs I follow too many blogs but some stand out: The 'Parks and Gardens UK' blog for garden history, 'Tales from Duck Island Cottage' for some little-known London garden gems, and the 'iPhylo' blog for the nerdier side of managing plant records.

Further information english-heritage.org.uk

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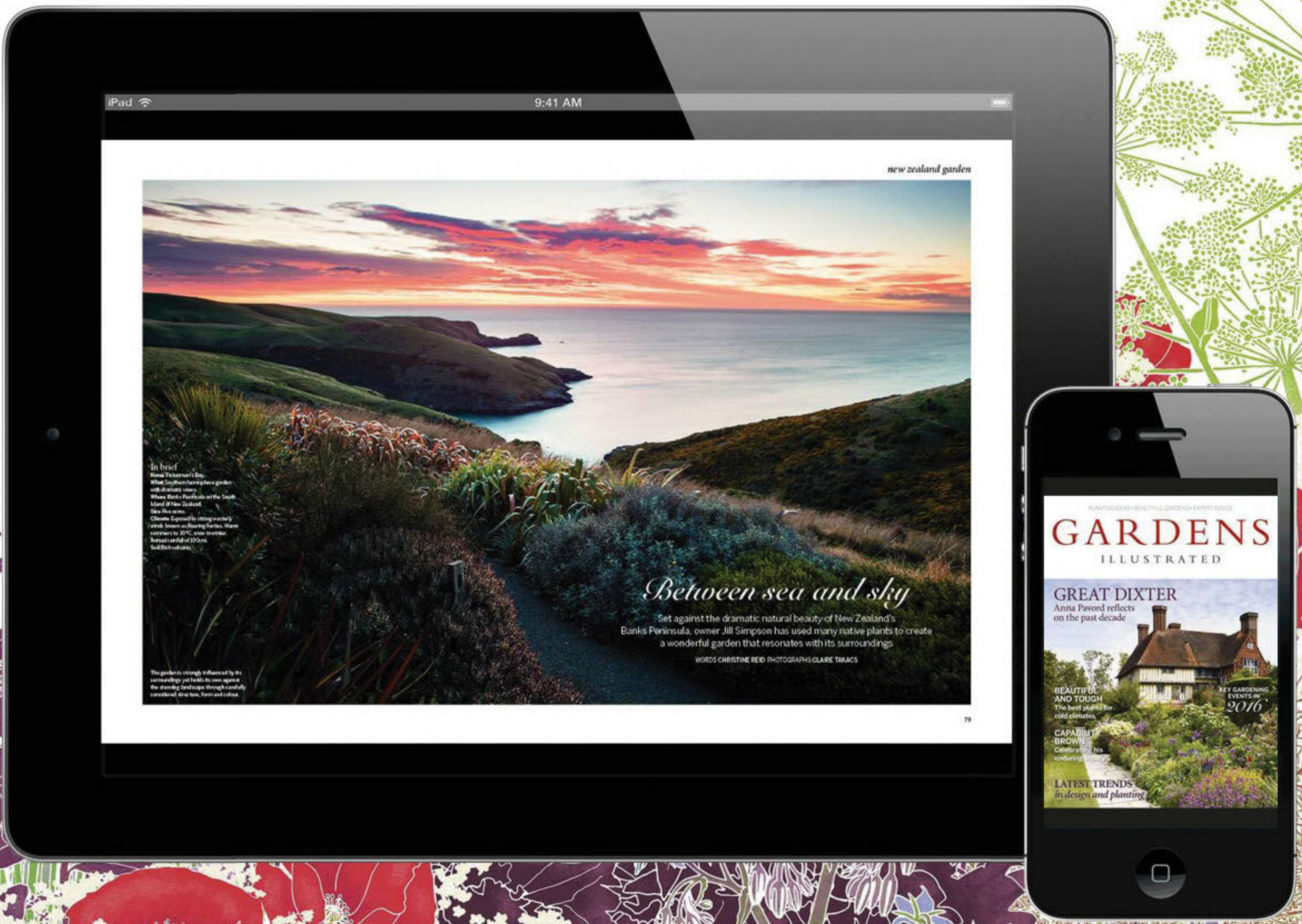
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Between sea and sky
Set against the dramatic natural beauty of New Zealand's Banks Peninsula, owner Jill Simpson has used many native plants to create a wonderful garden that resonates with its surroundings
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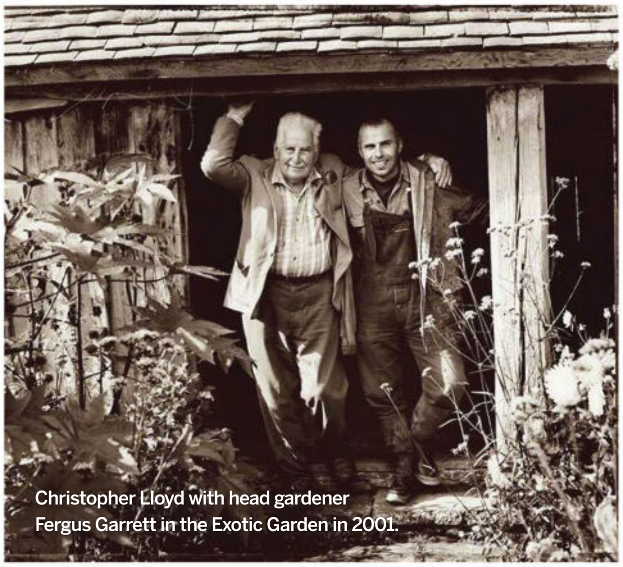
Dixter
ten years on

It's been a decade since Christopher Lloyd, the creator of one of the UK's most celebrated gardens, died, but over the past ten years his legacy has been kept alive by head gardener Fergus Garrett

WORDS ANNA PAVORD
PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY

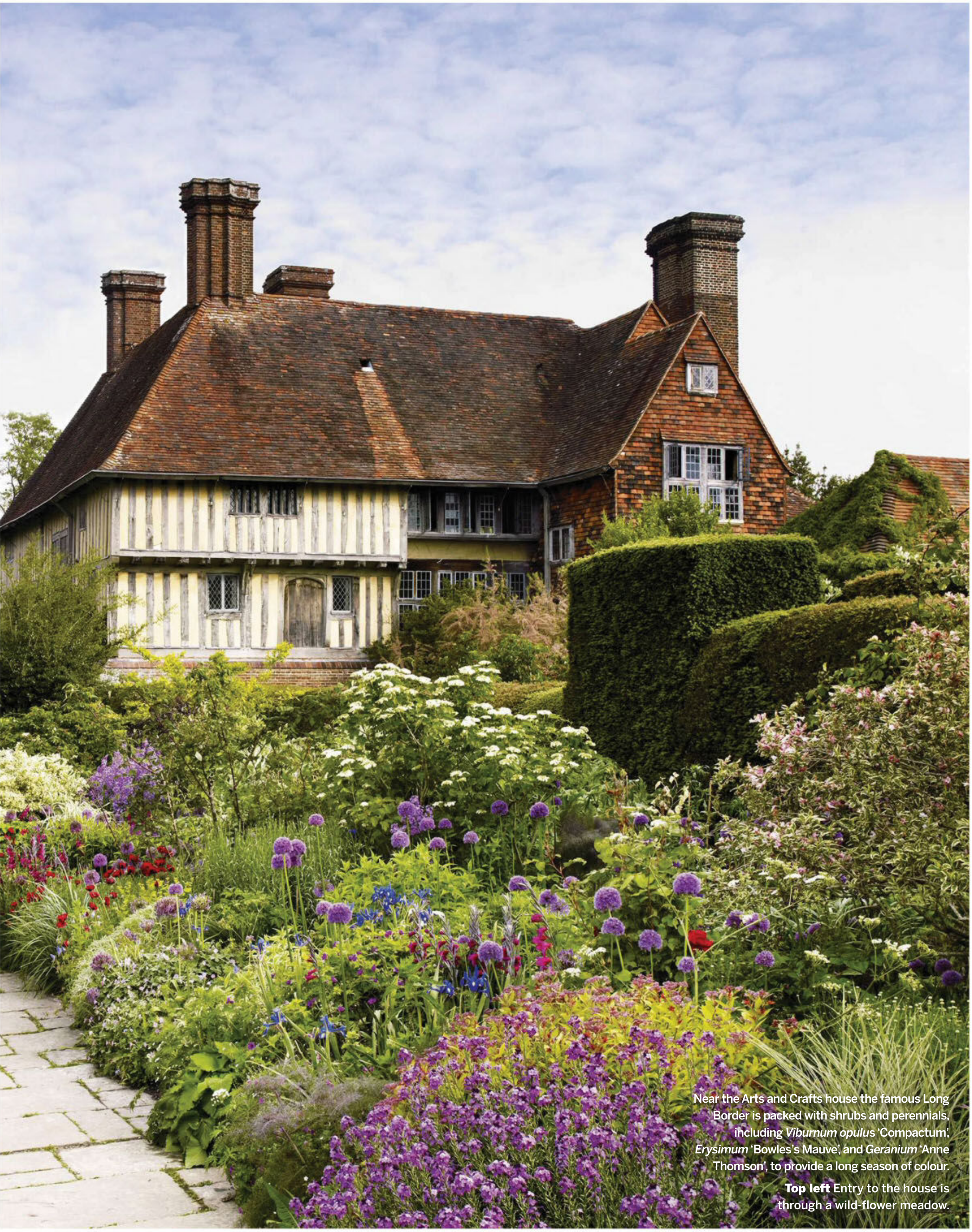


Christopher Lloyd with head gardener Fergus Garrett in the Exotic Garden in 2001.

TESSA TRAEGER

In brief

Name Great Dixter.
What Garden designed in the Arts and Crafts style for Nathaniel and Daisy Lloyd by Sir Edwin Lutyens. Extensively replanted by the Lloyds' son Christopher, it includes many distinct areas renowned for their exuberant planting, including the High Garden, Peacock Garden, Solar Garden, Barn Garden and Sunk Garden, as well as a vegetable garden, an Exotic Garden in what was originally a rose garden, a Topiary Lawn and several less formal meadow areas, including the Prairie and Orchard Garden.
Where Northiam, East Sussex.
Size Six acres.
Soil Clay.
Climate Temperate, with an average, annual rainfall of around 75cm.
Hardiness rating USDA 8.



Near the Arts and Crafts house the famous Long Border is packed with shrubs and perennials, including *Viburnum opulus* 'Compactum', *Erysimum* 'Bowles's Mauve', and *Geranium* 'Anne Thomson', to provide a long season of colour.

Top left Entry to the house is through a wild-flower meadow.

After visiting Great Dixter, the late Christopher Lloyd's garden in East Sussex, I still stagger out of the place high as a kite with visions: a vast *Furcraea* with a neck as tall as a giraffe's leering out of its pot in the sunken garden, wonky old espalier pears, hanging on to their Edwardian pedigrees, trying not to notice the crew of exuberant exotics sashaying through the stock beds behind them.

Ten years after Christopher's death, the place and the person still can't be divided. He was born at Dixter in 1921 and lived there for most of his life surrounded by the garden laid out at the turn of the century by his father, Nathaniel Lloyd, working with the architect Edwin Lutyens. The design remains intact, defined by generous yew hedges, wide borders, flagstone paths, and the curving circles of steps that are a Lutyens trademark.

The planting, though, changes all the time and this is the magic of Dixter. On my last visit, I watched a garden tractor and trailer trundle down the stone path from the entrance loaded with pots of tall lilies and the chimney bellflowers (*Campanula pyramidalis*) that Christopher always loved. Spent snapdragons and phlox were whisked away from the gorgeous display by the house porch to be replaced by the immaculate new arrivals. I could imagine Christopher leaning out of his bedroom window, just above the porch, urging on the crew of young gardeners engaged in this dramatic piece of scene shifting, praising, but also challenging. He was good at that. It kept you on your toes. Made you use your eyes.

Most of us think we are doing reasonably well if we manage to get a pot of petunias and helichrysum through the summer ▷

Clockwise from top left Box topiary pieces flank the entrance to the porch; Great Dixter staff and volunteers; the Peacock Garden with its topiary birds; colourful perennial planting in the Orchard Garden; *Lupinus* 'The Governor' with *Tulipa* 'Red Shine' and self-seeded cow parsley and *Smyrnium perfoliatum*; path to the Orchard Garden; shallow steps lead past espaliered 'Doyenne du Comice' pears.

"Christopher taught me to see, to really see. We understood each other, but I never, ever forgot that Dixter was his garden, not mine"

▷ without the plants folding up with thirst, or being attacked by earwigs, sat on by the cat or devoured by mildew. But at Dixter, by the porch, you might find *Geranium maderense* mixed with the blue spires of echium, or glossy, black-leaved aeoniums pushing through the foliage of a climbing *Tropaeolum tricolor* with bright-green leaves and tiny nasturtium-like flowers. Once, I remember the fleshily exotic pink flower spike of *Beschorneria yuccoides* rearing out of a herringbone cotoneaster. What a pair. Imagine Madonna on the arm of Ed Miliband and you get the idea.

For more than 50 years, Christopher Lloyd gardened at Dixter in his complex, powerful, devil-may-care way. But then in 1993 Fergus Garrett arrived as Dixter's new head gardener, henna-haired, half Turkish, half English, wholly original, and Dixter exploded into even more magnificent displays. Vast, strange exotics crept in among the roses. Bedding schemes – orange, purple, pink, yellow – outdid Versace. There was a buzz about the place, an excitement, an energy.

"He was lucky you came," I say to Fergus, as we sit on the Lutyens bench at the end of the Long Border, looking back down its length through long brush strokes of tamarix, drifting in its uncertain way from green leaf into pink flower. "I was lucky too," he immediately replies. "[Christopher] gave me a direction, opportunities. He taught me to see, to really see. He had such a brilliant mind, such a deep understanding of his subject. We understood each other. He always said that I ▷

Right The richly planted Peacock Garden has evolved greatly over the past decade. In between the yew hedges sweeps of perennial sunflowers, heleniums, monkshoods and rudbeckias are softened by grasses, such as *Calamagrostis acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', *Cortaderia fulvida* Zotov and *Miscanthus sinensis* var. *condensatus* 'Cosmopolitan'. Trees, including an old damson and Williams pear add structure.

"Sometimes Christopher would suggest something and I'd think, 'That's never going to work'. But it did"

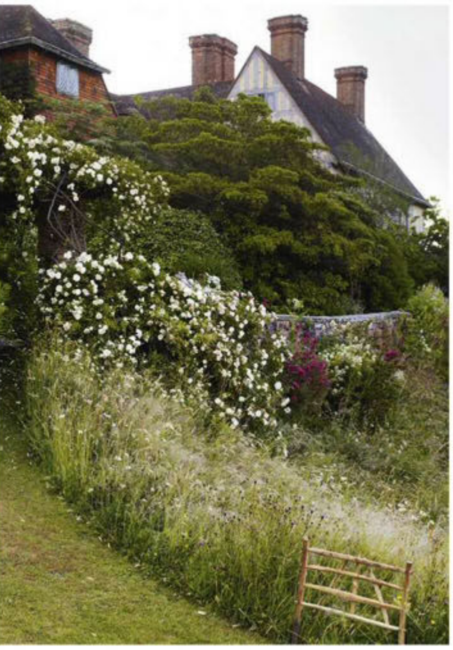
▷ was his closest friend. But I never, ever forgot that Dixter was his garden, not mine."

Christopher had an extraordinary gift for friendship, but always said that he lived his life back to front. When he was young, he had few friends his own age and spent most of his time with his mother and her friends. But when he was old, he surrounded himself with the young, had them to stay, cooked for them, raided the cellar for his best wine. Dixter began to attract a band of young gardeners who came from all over the world to work in a garden that was more vibrant, more surprising than anywhere else in Britain.

"Sometimes he'd suggest something and I'd think, 'That's never going to work'," says Fergus. "But it did. He could take a combination that was good and make it brilliant just by one little twist." But Fergus himself is extraordinarily good at that, threading purple opium poppies through the bulky perennials of the stock beds, introducing a very bizarre (but totally mesmerising) contorted larch among the bananas and *Tetrapanax* of the exotic garden, and dramatic Turkish umbellifers among the perennials of the High Garden. "When I do a new planting, I never think 'would he approve?' but if something works really well, I just long for him to be here to see it."

Through the not always easy time that followed immediately after Christopher's death, Fergus and his team battled hard to keep the spirit, the atmosphere, the ethos of Dixter intact. No, he said firmly. It would not be a good idea to bring people into the place through a shop. The little shop that ▷

Clockwise from top left The top end of the Long Border provides plenty of colour; a view across the lower moat meadow; Lutyens' trademark circular steps; the Lower Terrace wall with *Ferula communis*; the Barn and Sunk Garden with its famous octagonal pool; *Digitalis purpurea* 'Sutton's Apricot' bedded out by the 'Rose Garden Hovel'; the Lower Orchard meadow; the Potting Shed.



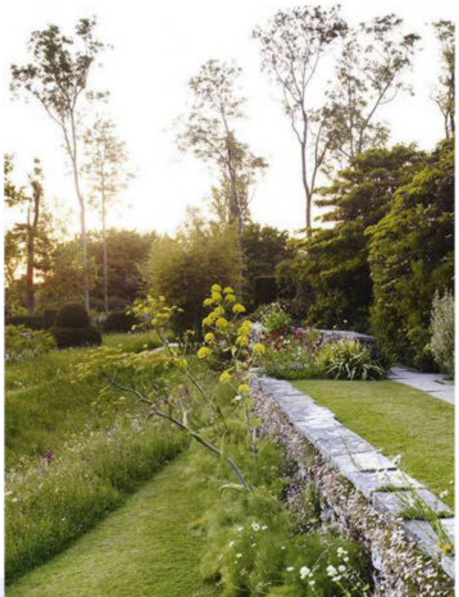
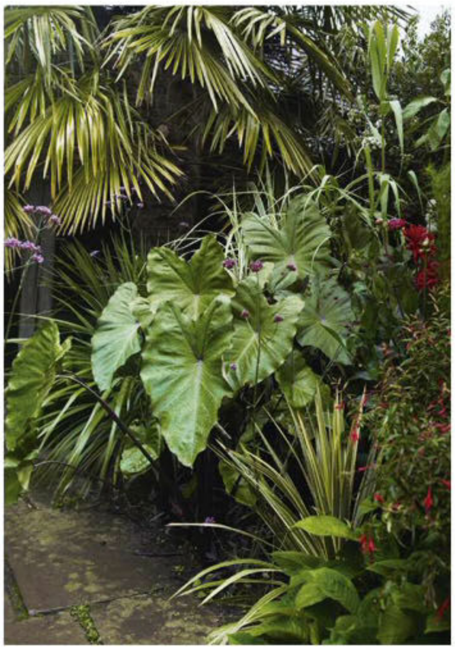


PHOTO BY MICHAEL GARLICK

Christopher established down by the nursery was perfectly adequate. No, he repeated even more firmly. It would not be an improvement to turn the big barn into a restaurant. How refreshing this is for the visitor, to be able to turn in through the wonky gate, and be immediately immersed in the Dixter world.

This approach, with its rough grass and eclectic selection of trees (they include the thorn *Crataegus orientali*) needs to be taken slowly. In spring there are sheets of small crocus. Then fritillaries, followed by orchids and camassias. Then cranesbills and finally autumn crocus rolling around in bed with fat colchicums. There have been changes in the 30 years I've known the garden, but in this area they have been slow and gradual.

Fergus though is not afraid of change. "When we're re-doing some planting, I don't go back to Christopher's books to copy something he talks about. New plants come in all the time and if they are good, we use them. He would have done the same. I respected him and he trusted me. I'm absolutely embedded in the Dixter ethos and it informs everything I do here." Ten years on, Great Dixter triumphantly manages a difficult balancing act: to be at the same time familiar and excitingly different.



USEFUL INFORMATION

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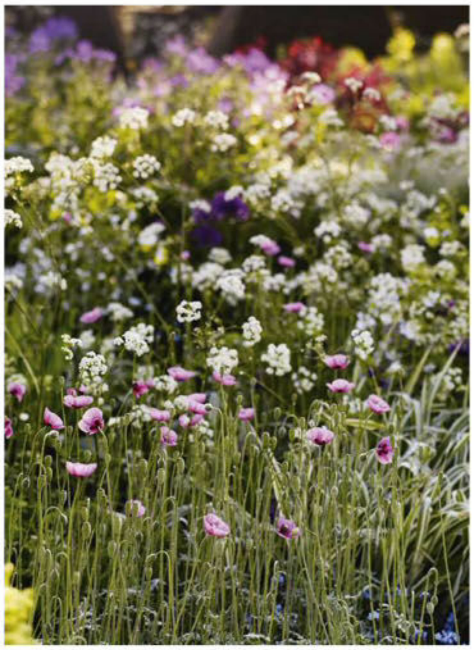
Fergus Garrett will be speaking at the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival** in Tetbury. See page 8 for details or visit gardensfestival.com

Save the date Fergus Garrett and writer Anna Pavord will host the next ***Gardens Illustrated* Reader Event** at Great Dixter, on 20 June 2016. Full details will be published in our April issue and on gardensillustrated.com

Turn the page for a list of 12 of Christopher Lloyd's and 12 of Fergus Garrett's favourite plants.

Clockwise from top left The Topiary Lawn's long grass, with self-sown orchids and wild flowers; 'Beth's poppies' and cow parsley; the Walled Garden by the Oast house; the Upper Moat meadow; eclectic display of pots in the Walled Garden; exotic planting within yew hedging; wide-leaved *Colocasia esculenta* 'Fontanesii'; Christopher Lloyd with his dachshund Canna; the aptly named Exotic Garden.



12 of Christopher's favourites

1 *Malus hupehensis*
Christopher thought this 'a most beautiful tree… its blossom is prodigious – usually pure white, but pink-flowered variants occur and are available.' Flowers May-June. 10m. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 3b-9b†.

2 *Rosa* 'Raubritter'
Bred by Kordes in Germany, this charming, hybrid from 'Macrantha' has clusters of rounded, clear-pink and slightly fragrant flowers above mid-green foliage. Flowers early summer. 1.5m.

3 *Trochodendron aralioides*
Large shrub (only frost hardy) with glossy, oval, dark green leaves. The flowers, carried at the tops of the shoots are a brighter green. Flowers May-June. 10m.

4 *Daphniphyllum macropodum*
'One of the handsomest features in my garden in winter… the most prominent feature is the bright carmine of the leaf stalks and main veins.' Flowers May-June. 6m. USDA 7a-9b.

5 *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Indian Summer'
A biennial or short-lived perennial coneflower with extra-large flowers of bright, golden-yellow around a dark chocolate centre. Flowers June-September. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 4a-10b.

6 *Euonymus fortunei* 'Silver Queen'
'A marvellous sight in maturity but sometimes desperately slow in its early years.' Dark-green leaves margined in white. 2.5m. USDA 4b-9b.

7 *Rosa rugosa*
A vigorous shrub that makes a dense clump of leathery, corrugated leaves, bright green when young. Single pink flowers are carried from June-October. 2.5m. USDA 2a-9b.

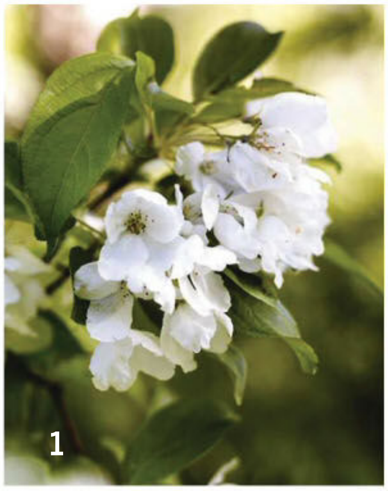
8 *Rodgersia pinnata* 'Maurice Mason'
Handsome with deeply divided palmate leaves, bronze in the spring gradually turning green with age. Flowers are borne on panicles of tall stems and are coral pink turning deeper with age, followed by an impressive skeleton. 1.2m.

9 *Viola cornuta* Alba Group
A vigorous group that makes large clumps bearing white flowers April-September. 15cm. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-10b.

10 *Verbascum olympicum*
A biennial 'which will provide the unpremeditated joy of appearing in different places in different years.' Yellow flowers from June-July. 2m. USDA 5a-9b.

11 *Paris polyphylla* (FCC form)
'A marvellously constructed plant for a damp, humus-rich position in partial shade'. Flowers late May-October. 60cm.

12 *Polystichum setiferum* 'Pulcherrimum Bevis'
For Christopher this was among ferns 'the most beautiful… with elongated divisions, incurving near to the frond tip. It is generally sterile, but makes a huge hummock.' 60-80cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9a.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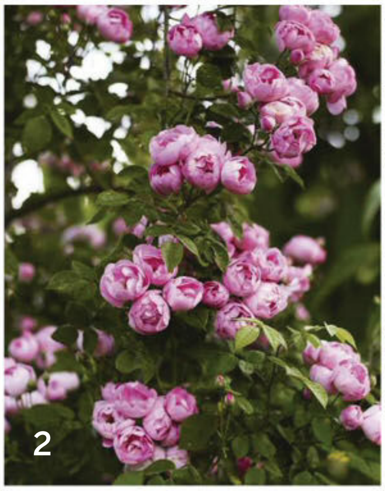
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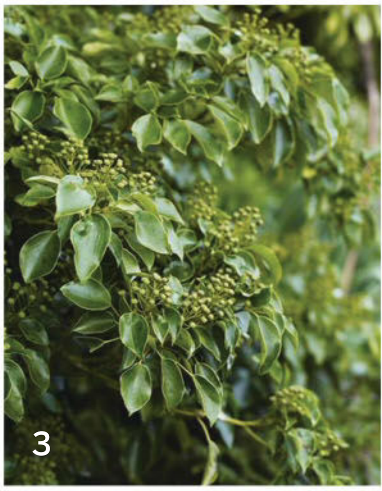
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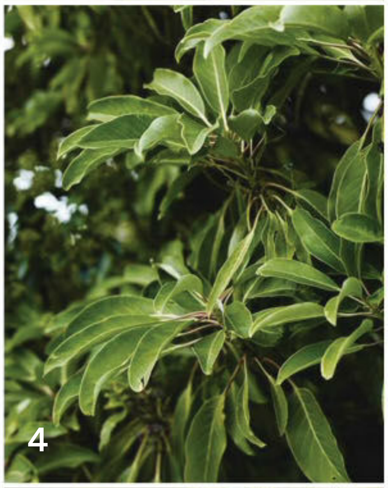
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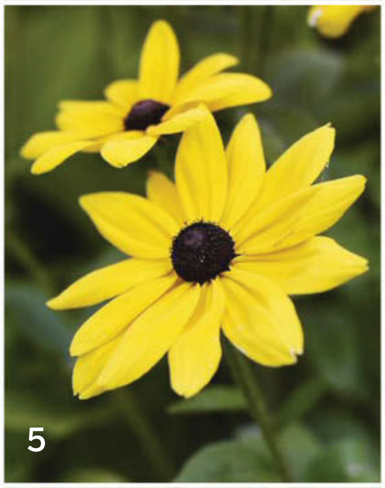
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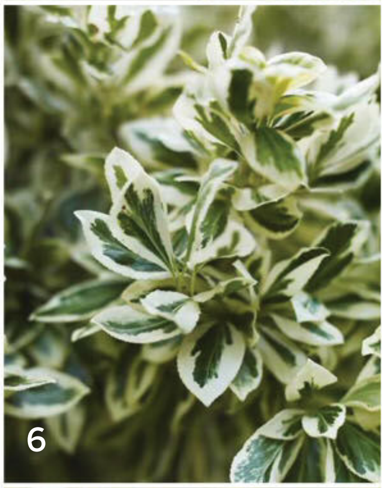
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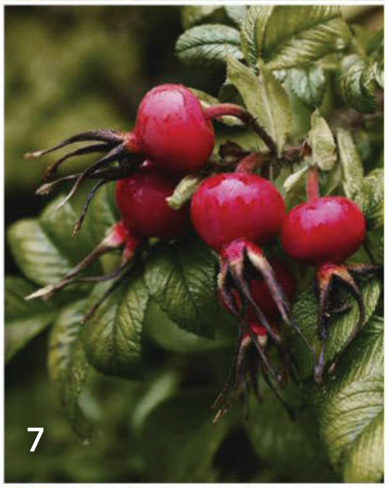
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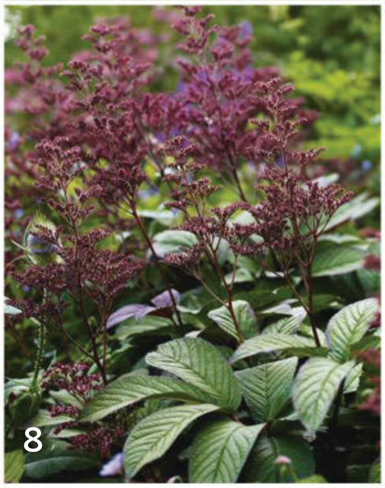
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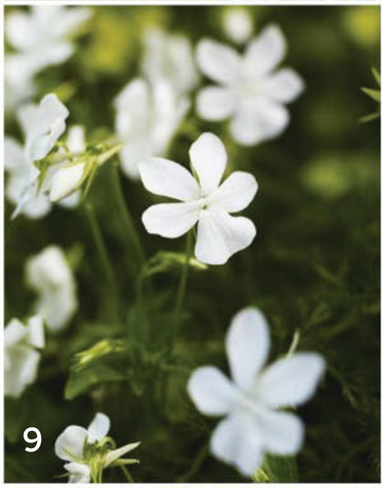
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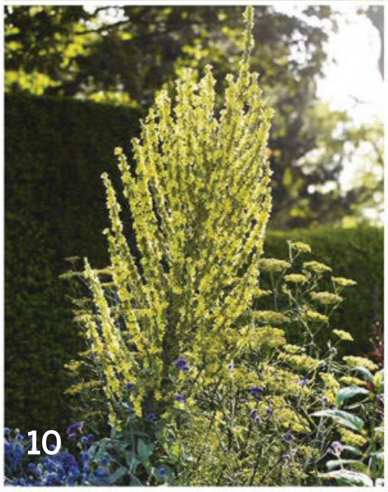
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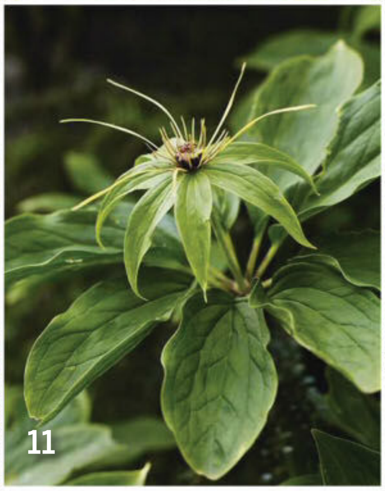
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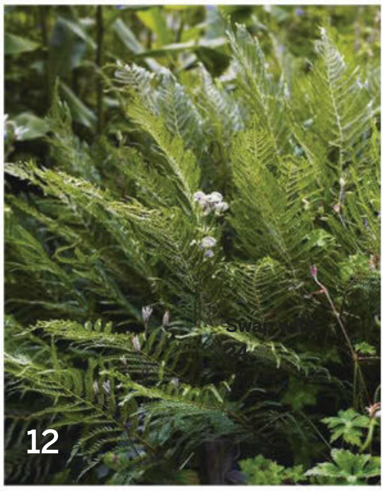
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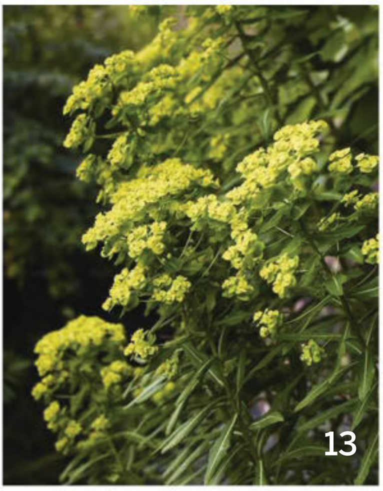
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.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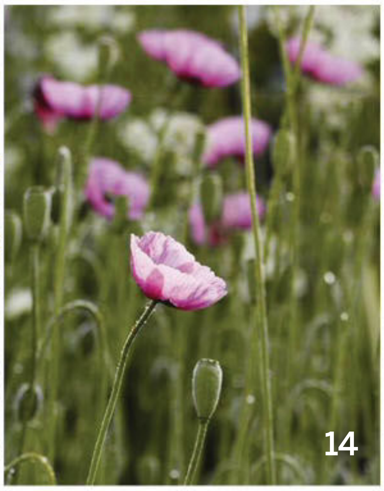
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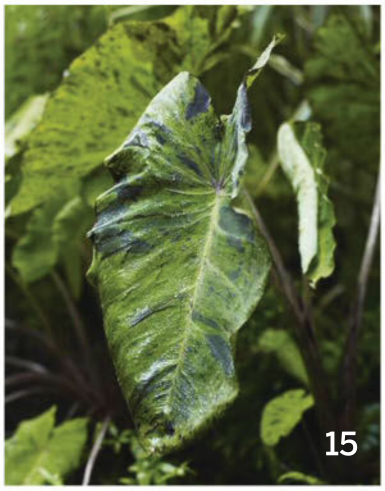
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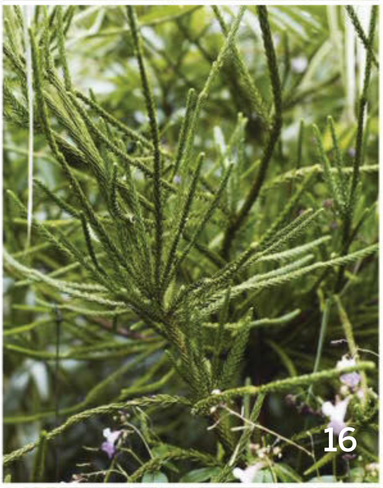
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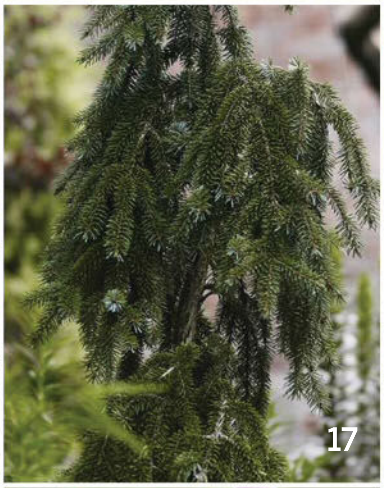
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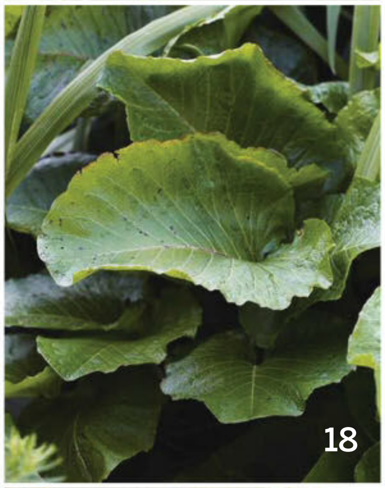
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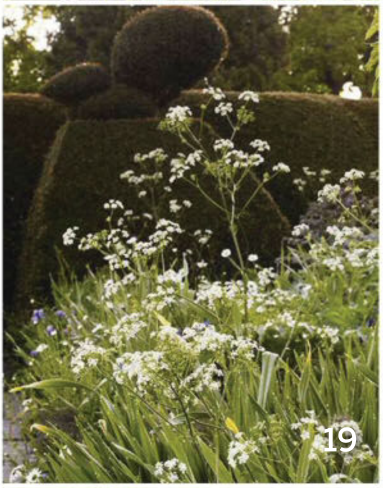
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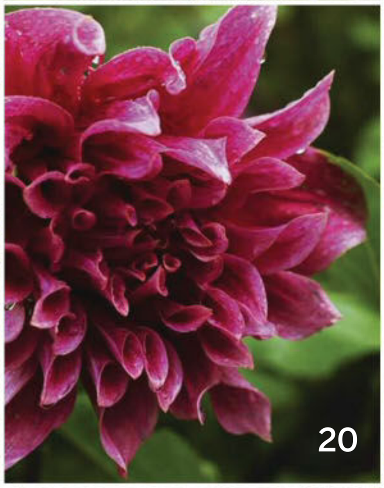
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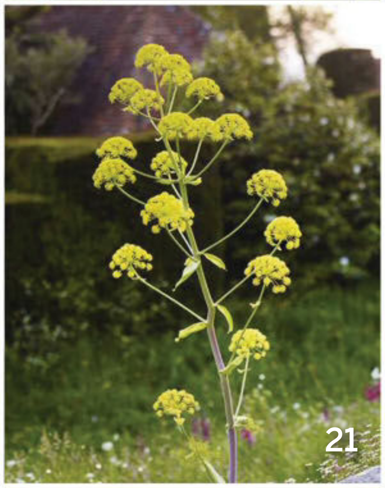
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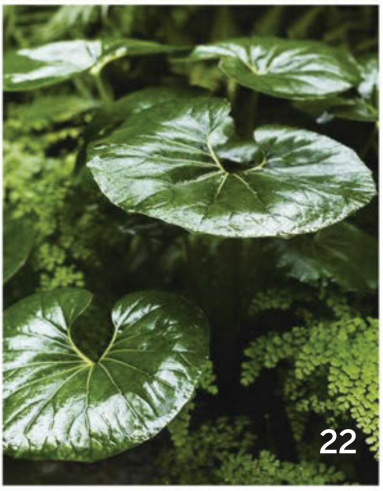
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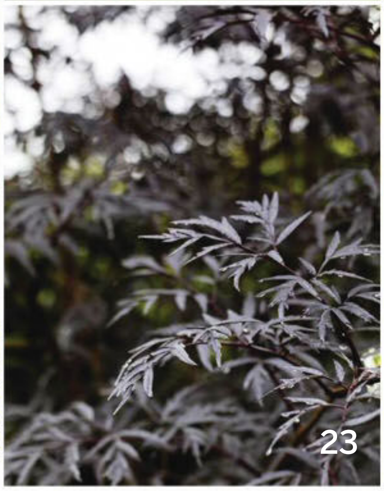
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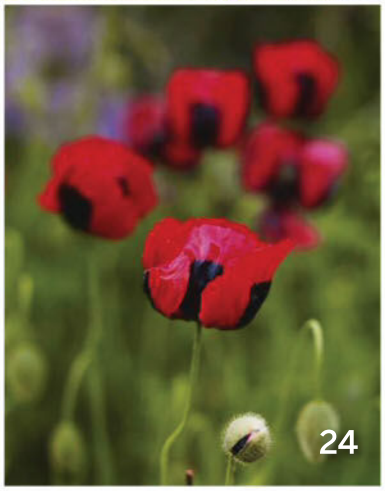
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12 of Fergus's favourites

13 *Euphorbia donii* 'Amjillasa'
Long-flowering, herbaceous spurge, decorated from the knees up with dark green leaves each centrally flashed with a pale midrib. Large, flattish, lime-green florets last well into October. 1m.

14 *Papaver dubium* subsp. *lecoqii* 'Albiflorum'
A marvellous annual poppy with tiny pink flowers in spring, perfect for running through other plants. Came to Dixter from Beth Chatto. Flowers May-June. 50cm.

15 *Colocasia esculenta* 'Mojito'
Pale, ruby-pink stems carry heart-shaped yellow green leaves dappled with inky purple flecks. Loves heat and humidity. 1.8m. USDA 7a-11.

16 *Cryptomeria japonica* Araucarioides Group
An animated and quirky conifer of great character. Grows with an open habit made up of whorls of rope-like, dark-green, spidery branches. 4.5m.

17 *Picea omorika* 'Pendula'
A narrow spruce, with weeping branches. Habit predominantly upright yet with an unruly leader that often leans heavily to one side. 20m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

18 Rumex alpinus
The monk's dock has large, heart-shaped, exotic-looking leaves, from which rise stems of pink flowers, followed by brown seedheads. Flowers June. 1.2m.

19 *Anthriscus sylvestris*
The common cow parsley decorates the garden with dainty sprays of chalky white flowers in early summer. Clumps are thinned in the spring. 1m.

20 *Dahlia* 'Emory Paul'
This spellbinding Giant Decorative has double, rich-pink blooms 30cm in diameter, on strong stems. Reputedly the largest-flowered dahlia. July-October. 2.5m.

21 *Ferula communis* seedlings
No relation to the culinary fennel (which is *Foeniculum vulgare*). Finely dissected foliage, eventually produces a giant stem on which balance yellow umbels of flower. In bloom June. 3m. RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.

22 *Farfugium japonicum*
A tender perennial with large, rounded leaves, leathery and highly glossed, held outwardly radiating from a central core. Insignificant yellow daisy flowers in winter. 60cm. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.

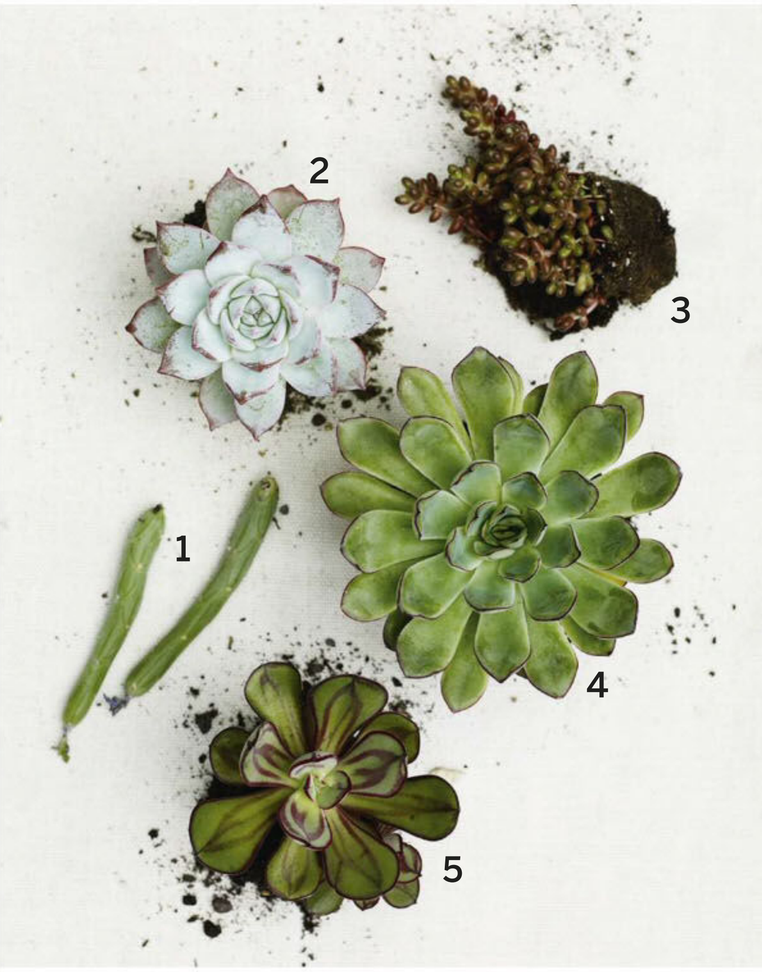
23 *Sambucus nigra* f. *porphyrophylla* 'Eva'
When pollarded, this black, cut-leaved elder gives arching sprays of stems. Deep-pink buds, clustered on flat plates, open into pale-pink flowers on last season's wood. 3m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.

24 *Papaver commutatum* 'Ladybird'
A dazzling poppy with sinewy stems and fat buds that open to thin, silky petalled, cupped flowers of pillar-box red, with a broad, black blotch at the base. Flowers May-June. 50cm. RHS H5.

Small worlds

Terrariums – wonderful miniature gardens created under glass – are making a comeback. They not only add a dynamic element to a room, but also create a tiny eco-system you can enjoy close up

WORDS ALI BELL PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY



Plant geometry

I chose the geometric shape of this glass dodecahedron as it both magnifies and frames the symmetric forms of the *Echeveria* and other small sculptural succulents, whose intricate details are best appreciated close up. Although these water-retaining plants prefer hot, dry and well-drained conditions, they can thrive in a partly open terrarium, such as this one, in which the air is still able to circulate and keep humidity levels relatively low.

How to achieve the look

Plants

The three *Echeveria* plants are the stars of the show. Tones of cool greens and blues are linked by the red accents on the leaves. The *Sedum* will colonise happily between the rocks and other plants, and the *Senecio* provides height at the back of the terrarium. When it grows too big I will replace it with smaller pieces. You should place the terrarium in a cool, bright room, avoiding direct sunlight, which risks glass magnifying the heat and scorching the fleshy leaves. Water these plants very sparingly, hardly at all in winter, and once every two weeks in summer if required.

Planting process

Start by putting 2.5cm-layer of pebbles for drainage, mixed in with a handful of activated charcoal into the base of your chosen container. It's much easier to work out your plant combinations on the table first before planting as you have more room for manoeuvre. After you've decided on a design, start placing them in the terrarium. As this container had an opening at the front I planted it up from the back to the front so as not to damage or bruise the plants. The easiest way to plant in a confined space like this – and to some degree all terrariums – is to use a long-handled spoon to place soil around them. After dressing with gravel I placed some stones I had collected to match tonally around the plants to make it look more like the plant's natural environment. Finally, I used a paintbrush to remove any soil or gravel that had been spilled.

Plants

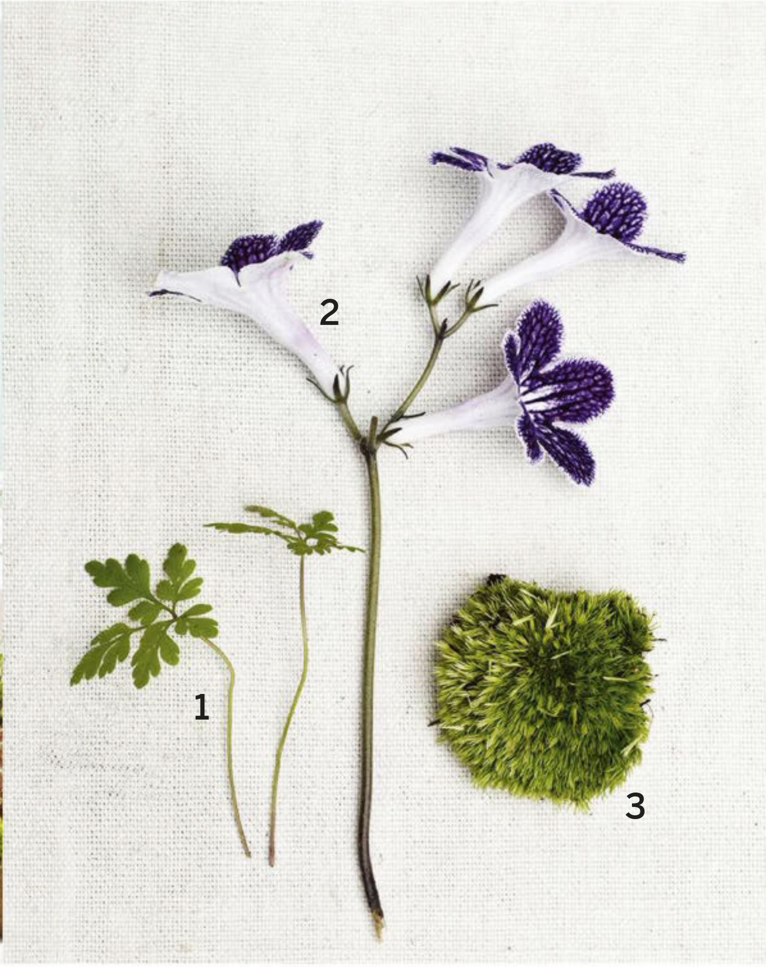
1 ***Senecio articulatus***
2 ***Echeveria colorata* AGM***
3 ***Sedum album* 'Coral Carpet'**
4 ***Echeveria pulidonis* AGM**
5 ***Echeveria nodulosa* 'Painted Beauty'**

Materials

To create a terrarium you'll need:

- Pebbles for drainage, ideally around 1cm in diameter.
- Activated charcoal. Mix in a handful with your pebbles to keep the eco-system sweet and avoid any stagnation and fungi that can occur when there is a lack of drainage.
- Soil, to suit your choice of plants.
- Moss or gravel to dress. As you'll probably need to use sphagnum, pincushion and sheet moss in fairly large quantities, it is best to buy them from a specialist supplier.
- Natural objects found in your garden to enhance planting ideas.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.



Genus in a bottle

The high levels of humidity and stable temperature created within a terrarium mimics the natural growing conditions for the subtropical *Streptocarpus* and provides the plant with a safe refuge from today's dry, centrally heated homes. This Hungarian oil jar can be used with or without a lid – as long as the plants are encased in glass the humidity levels are greater. Bell jar cloches provide the most sealed-off and humid environments of all terrariums.

How to achieve the look

Plants

Streptocarpus, or Cape primrose, comes from subtropical mountain forests and unlike many foliage plants suited to terrariums, it will also produce beautiful flowers as it is happy to bloom in indirect sun. This new cultivar from Dibleys is particularly striking and I wanted to underplant its deeply veined, purple flowers with a calm, green background. The simple and delicate foliage of the *Geranium robertianum* seedlings and the soft shapes of the pincushion moss create a natural feel. *Umbilicus rupestris*, ivy and fern species also work well, as would baby *Begonia rex*, which has crazily shaped leaf forms that look amazing under glass – you can even propagate seedlings while showcasing them in a bell jar cloche.

Planting process

Less is definitely more in a terrarium, so create space by trimming off larger leaves before planting. When squashed against glass, leaves look unattractive and suffer from fungal problems. Start with a 2.5cm-thick layer of pebbles and a handful of charcoal as before. If you are planting a developed root system into a shallow base, carefully split the root ball and pull the two halves out horizontally. I placed the *Streptocarpus* centrally in the jar and planted *Geranium robertianum* around it. Finally, I added more soil and covered with the pincushion moss using my homemade tamper (see box right) to firm it all down. I used scissors to deadhead the *Streptocarpus* and removed any old foliage with tongs. It should need very little watering.

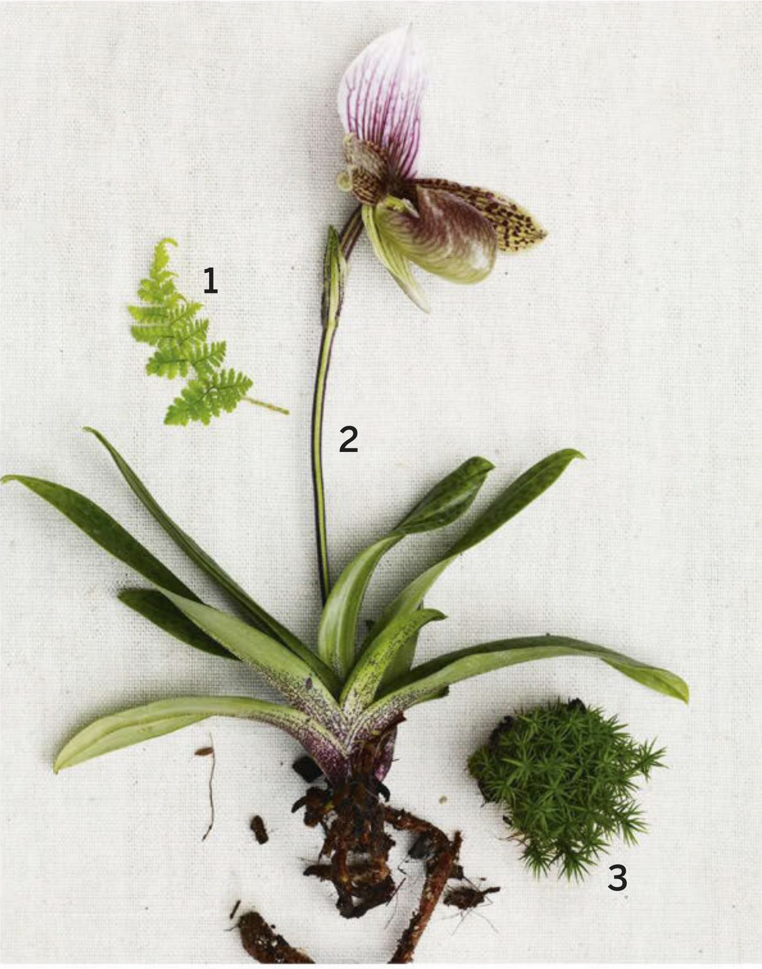
Plants

1 *Geranium robertianum*
2 *Streptocarpus* 'Polka-Dot Purple'
3 *Leucobryum glaucum*

Terrarium tools

For displays like these you'll need:

- A homemade tamper for firming in plants – a chopstick with a cork on one end is perfect.
- Long-handled wooden salad spoon and fork to use as a trowel and for evening out soil or raking gravel.
- Large wooden spoon, wrapped in kitchen roll, to clean around edges of terrarium after planting.
- Large wooden knitting needles for making smaller holes or moving plants around.
- Long tweezers or tongs for placing stones or rocks.
- Scissors for maintaining plants.
- Fish fork for removing moss from your garden.
- Paintbrush to remove spilled soil.



Case of the glass slipper

I found this lovely terrarium in a charity shop. It's a modern-day nod to the Wardian cases used by Victorian plant hunters for transporting home their exotic treasures. As a reminder of its origins I've decided to plant it with a Victorian delight – a tropical version of the lady's slipper orchid. You need only water the orchid once before planting and this closed terrarium will keep it moist and happy. Don't worry if condensation forms; it means the terrarium is working.

How to achieve the look

Plants

I wanted to give this terrarium a Victorian feel, with the delicate, dusky pink orchid and the fresh green of the young fern standing out against the brown tones of the tree root. *Paphiopedilum sukhakulii* x *charlesworthii*, a beautiful cross between two popular orchid species, is perfect for this terrarium, as it is small and compact, with neat mottled foliage. The intricate pink flowers often appear twice a year and under glass can last up to six weeks. I was spoilt for choice when it came to deciding on a fern to group with the mosses. In the end I went for simplicity – a young native male fern, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, which I found in my garden. I used a combination of sheet moss and a small amount of *Polytrichum commune* – a moss with a starry appearance collected from my garden – to give a natural feel to the planting combination.

Planting process

On to a layer of pebbles and charcoal, I placed a beautifully formed mossy root in the terrarium, after carefully checking that it wasn't harbouring any slugs or other pests. Next I tucked the orchid in behind the root to make it look as though it was growing out from behind it. Instead of using soil I used orchid compost surrounded with damp sphagnum moss. I slipped the fern in a small amount of compost in front of the root and dressed with the remaining moss. Closed terrariums, such as this, need airing out for a few hours every two to three weeks. Lightly water if no condensation forms after replacing the lid.

Plants

1 *Dryopteris filix-mas* AGM
2 *Paphiopedilum sukhakulii*
x *charlesworthii*
3 *Polytrichum commune*

Recommended suppliers

(for all three displays)

- **Cactus Shop**
  Tel 0871 266 3678, cactusshop.co.uk
- **Dee Puddy**
  Tel 01794 323020, deepuddy.co.uk
- **Dibleys Nurseries**
  Tel 01978 790677, dibleys.com
- **Kelways**
  Tel 01458 250521, kelways.co.uk
- **Ray Creek Orchids**
  Tel 01724 798445, raycreekorchids.com
- **Shady Plants** shadyplants.net
- **Waen** waenglass.com

PLEASE NOTE

Never take any plants from the wild. All mosses shown came from the author's garden or were bought as cultivated moss.

Cold climate plants

With its long, cold winters and short springs, Sweden is one of the toughest places in Europe to be a woody plant, but many thrive. So if you too are gardening in tough conditions, these Swedish-tested plants are the ones to pick

WORDS **MATTHEW BIGGS**

***Philadelphus* 'Belle étoile'**
A free-flowering deciduous shrub with richly fragrant, white blooms that have a bold, dark blotch at their centre. 1.2m. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b†.

In brief

What Tough ornamental plants for cold locations.
Origins Sub-alpine zones worldwide.
Season A range of plants that offer year-round interest.
Size Small shrubs to medium-sized trees.
Conditions Full sun to part shade.
Hardiness ratings RHS H5-H6, USDA 5a-7b.

FRIEDRICH STRAUSS / GAP PHOTOS

Matthew Biggs is a Kew-trained gardener, TV presenter and the author of several books. He is also a regular panellist on BBC Radio 4's *Gardeners' Question Time*.

Hostile climates come in many forms. Gardeners may face long snowy winters with a short spring, sub-zero temperatures when the ground freezes for months, exposed headlands or hillsides where the wind chill factor takes its toll, or garden at altitude in northern climes with a growing season measured in a few short weeks. Nothing quenches our desire to create a garden, whatever the challenges, though it is often a prerequisite that we share the same resilience as our plants.

The hardiness of many woody plants is affected by the moisture levels in the soil, a combination of cold and water-logging proving fatal, with drier soils increasing the chance of survival. Even when cut back to the ground by cold weather, plants often re-grow from the base, particularly when they are mulched to protect them from freezing. Herbaceous plants, which survive many weeks under a blanket of snow, dislike wet frozen soil during dormancy, so true cold-climate plants need to be robust and tolerant of the conditions. Careful research and selection and 'putting the 'right plant in the right place' is essential for success.

Someone who knows a thing or two about gardening in a cold climate is the designer Ulf Nordfjell. The Chelsea gold medallist, who won best in show in 2009, is based in Stockholm and his own garden is 150 miles north of the city where winter temperatures can fall as low as -18°C and the soil can stay frozen under snow for several months. Many of the woody plants Ulf recommends to his Swedish clients will be familiar to UK gardeners, but to discover that they are suitable for growing in the north of the UK, on isolated hills or places with long, cold winters, may come as a surprise.

Ulf's list of favourite plants, which he shares with us here, includes evergreens for winter structure, but also deciduous trees, such as the rounded crown of *Cornus mas* (see next page) provide stunning

▷

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ winter silhouettes. The red flowers of *Hamamelis* x *intermedia* 'Diane' (see page 56) and berries of *Ilex* x *meserveae* Blue Princess (='Conapri') (page 57) add welcome colour, as do coloured stems, notably those of *Cornus sanguinea* 'Winter Flame' and its hardier relative *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica', which survives further north. Both work well with the white bark of *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* 'Doorenbos' (page 57) or bronze *Prunus maackii* 'Amber Beauty'.

Spring highlights include *Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Merrill' (below right), forming huge clouds of white when grown as a multi-stemmed specimen, and aristocratic *Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii', (below right), a picture of elegance and serenity. These both create a spectacular focal point in the garden while two splendid trees, compact *Malus* 'Evereste' (below right) and European native *Prunus avium* 'Plena' (right) also enhance with billowing clouds of blossom.

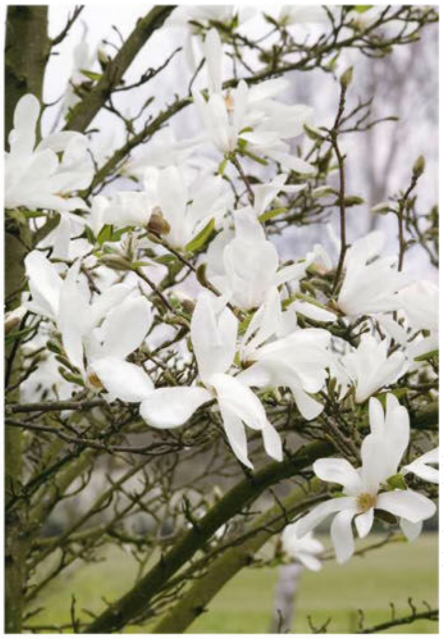
As days lengthen, the palette of flowers increases. *Rosa* Iceberg (='Korbin')(page 54) performs with typical panache and later in the season hydrangeas display their glory, including *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Le Vasterival'(page 55), a recent introduction from the Normandy garden of Princess Greta Sturdza, with elegant blooms that reflect their regal heritage. As summer fades to autumn, trees such as *Acer palmatum* 'Osakazuki' (page 56), are highlights wherever they are planted, lighting up the garden with flaming autumn colour.

Hardy geraniums, particularly *Geranium macrorrhizum* 'Spessart', a vigorous weed-suppressing ground cover, with apple-scented, fresh-green leaves that turn red in autumn, and the long-flowering *G.* 'Sirak' with luminous, mauve-pink flowers, thrive in long, cold winters and short, light summers. *Nepeta* x *faassenii* 'Six Hills Giant' – the 'Lavender of the Nordic Countries' – is an invaluable long-flowering nectar source. Several grasses also perform well, particularly the tuft-forming *Sesleria heufleriana*, with deep purple spiklets and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Malepartus' can be slow to start but is well worth the wait.

One thing is certain: no matter how harsh the climate, there are plenty of delightful yet durable plants to create a beautiful garden. □

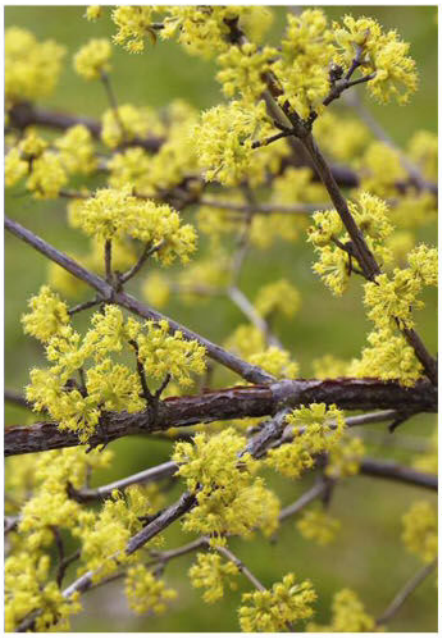
• Recommendations for hardy plants for cold climates continue over the next six pages.

Spring



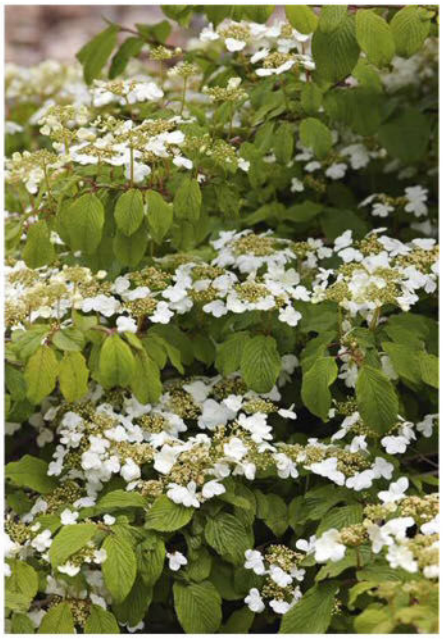
PAUL DEBOIS / GAP PHOTOS

Magnolia kobus
A beautiful, large shrub or deciduous tree, excellent on all soils, including chalk. Fragrant, six-petalled, white flowers precede pink fruits with scarlet seeds. 10m. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.



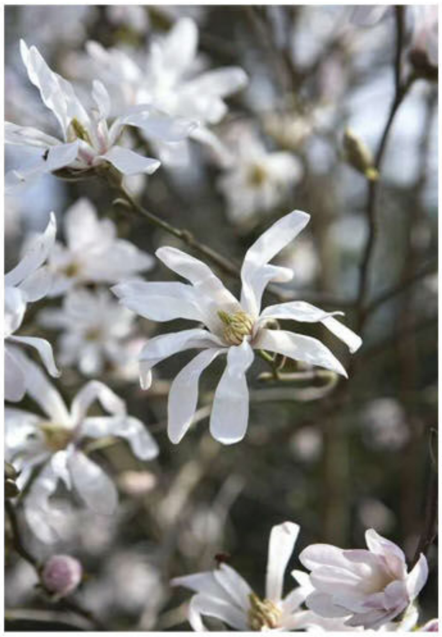
VISIONS / GAP PHOTOS

Cornus mas
This large, deciduous shrub, or small tree, has reddish-purple, autumn colour followed by masses of yellow flowers on naked branches in early spring and small glossy, red fruits in summer. 5m. USDA 4a-8a†.



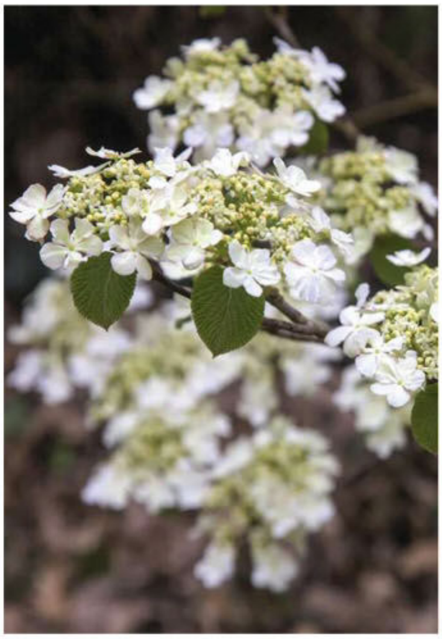
CHRISTINA BOLLEN / GAP PHOTOS

***Viburnum plicatum* f. *tomentosum* 'Mariesii'**
Rows of large, white, lacecap flowers appear in spring in clusters along the tiered branches of this deciduous shrub, with prominently veined, dark-green leaves. 2m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5b-9a.



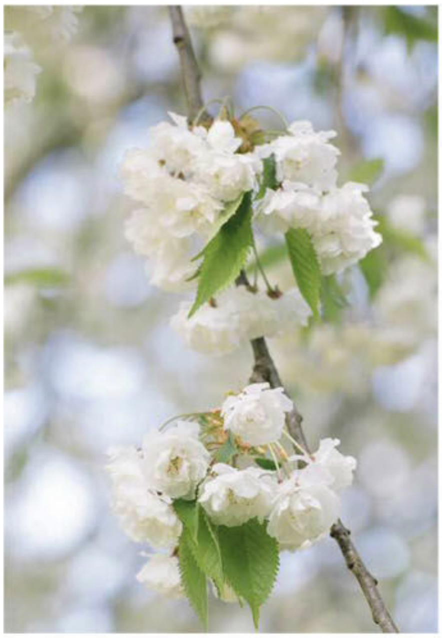
MATT ANKER / GAP PHOTOS

***Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Merrill'**
A vigorous small tree, whose fragrant white flowers, measuring up to 10cm across, appear before the leaves. Even young plants will flower freely. 8m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.



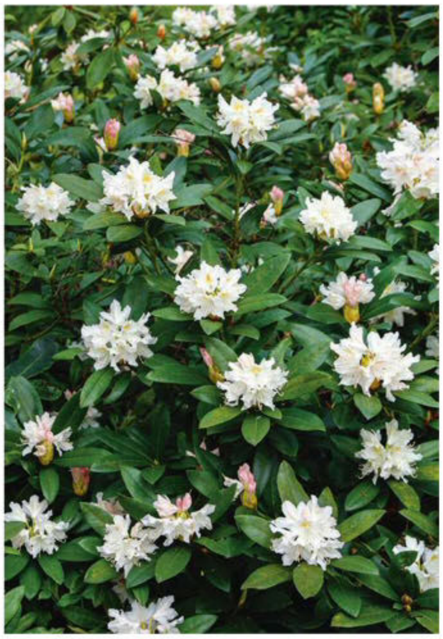
REX MAY / ALAMY

Viburnum furcatum
In spring this large and upright, deciduous shrub, has lacecap heads of creamy-white flowers. In autumn red berries that ripen to black complement the autumnal foliage. 7m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 7a-9b.



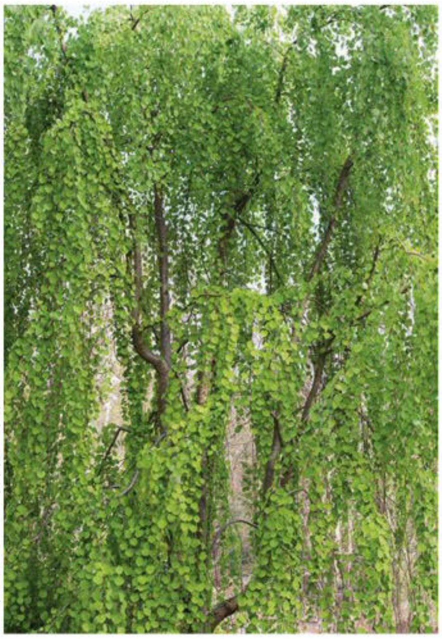
AMY VONHEIM / GAP PHOTOS

***Prunus avium* 'Plena'**
One of the most beautiful native European flowering trees, with attractive bark and decked with hanging clusters of white, double flowers. Autumn colour is vibrant orange-yellow. 12m. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.



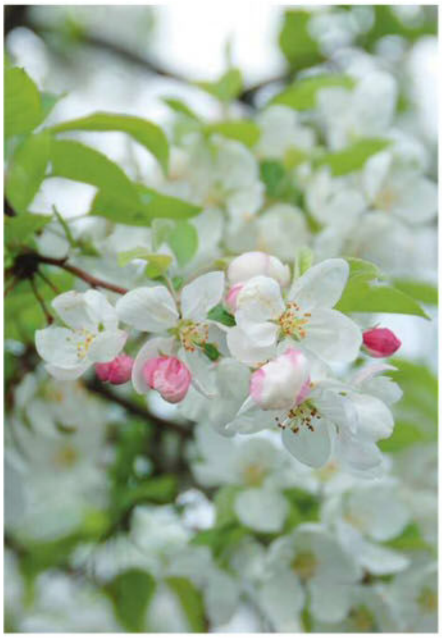
REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Rhododendron* 'Cunningham's White'**
This compact hybrid is one of many cold-hardy rhododendrons. The dark-green leaves, a perfect foil for mauve-pink flowers that fade to white. Tolerates slightly alkaline soils. 2m. RHS H6, USDA 6a-8b.



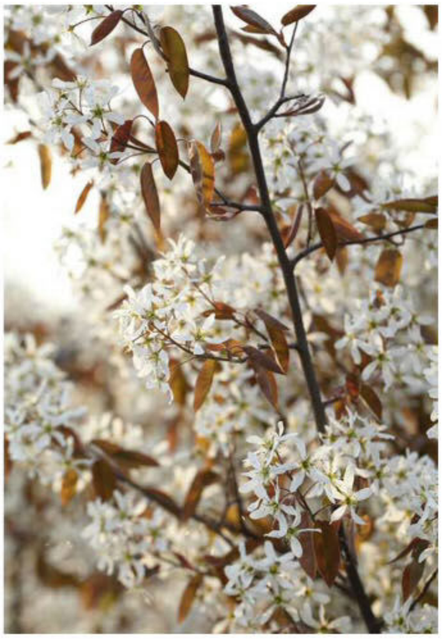
TIM GAINEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Göteborg'**
A beautiful yet robust, medium shrub to tree. It has an upright form but becomes broader with age. Boasts an attractive silhouette and has yellow-orange, vanilla-scented autumn leaves. 10m.



BLICKWINKEL / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

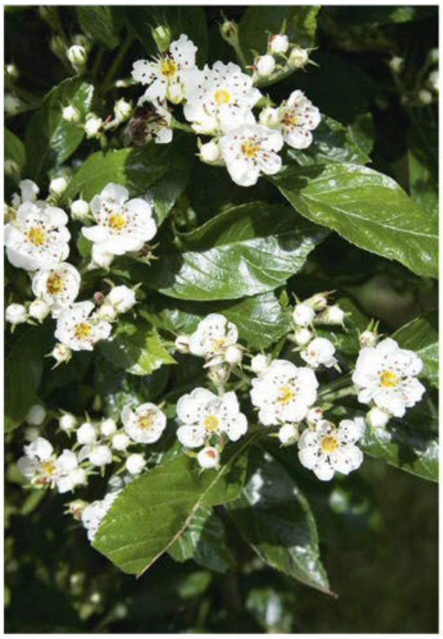
***Malus* 'Evereste'**
Red buds open to white flowers on this small, conical crab apple that has dark-green, slightly lobed leaves. Flowers are followed by yellow-orange fruits in autumn. 7m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.



VISIONS / GAP PHOTOS

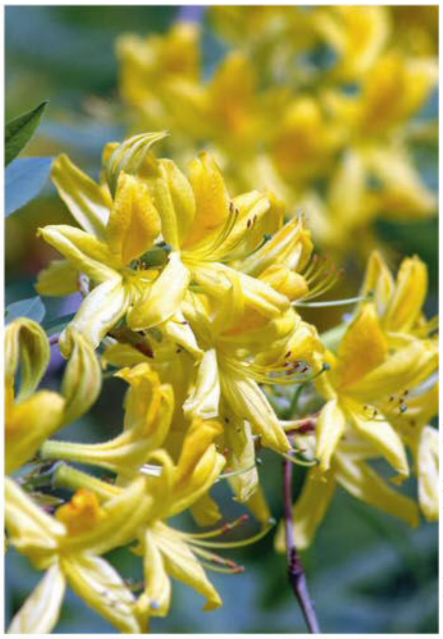
Amelanchier lamarckii
Copper-tinted, young shoots appear alongside clouds of white flowers in spring. In autumn the main draw is its fiery foliage; its dark, autumn berries are soon devoured by birds. 10m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-10a.

Summer



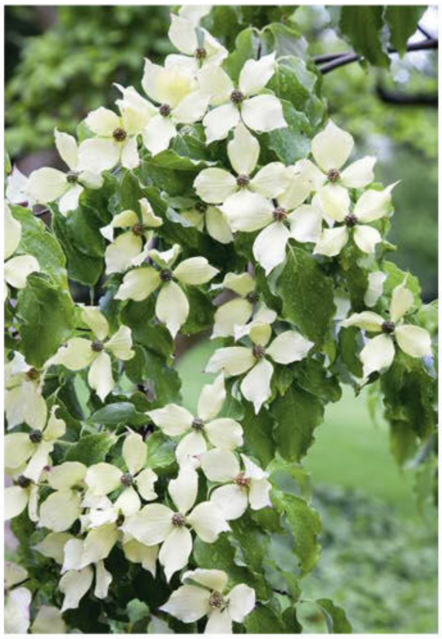
NOVA GRAPHIK / FP / THE GARDEN COLLECTION

***Crataegus* x *lavalleei* 'Carrierei'**
A dense, compact tree that is worth planting for its large, white flowers, but also provides rich, autumn colour and large, long-lasting orange berries.
7m. AGM. RHS H6.



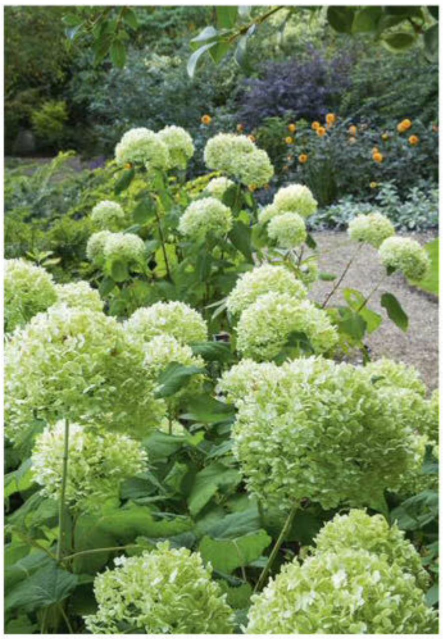
KPZFOTO / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Rhododendron luteum
Formerly known as *Azalea pontica,* this shrub boasts golden-yellow flowers in late spring and early summer that have a sweet, rich fragrance and offers bright, bonfire tones of autumn colour. 4m. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.



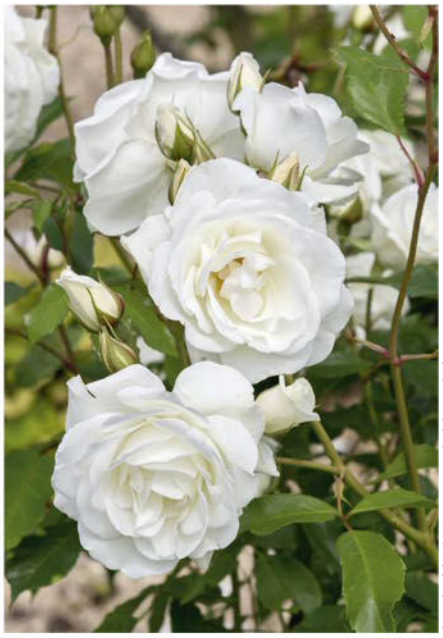
NOVA GRAPHIK / FP / THE GARDEN COLLECTION

Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis
A free-flowering large shrub or small deciduous tree, with white bracts in midsummer and long-lasting, flaming autumn colour. The fruits are a deep pink.
7m. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.



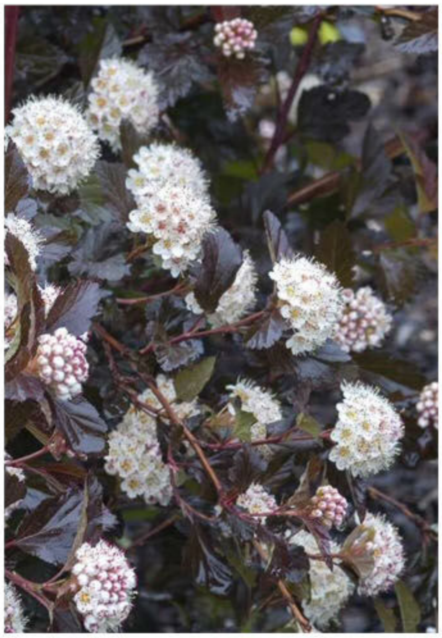
MMGI / MARIANNE MAJERUS / DENMANS, SUSSEX / DESIGN: JOHN BROOKES

***Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle'**
Perfect for growing in pots, this glorious hydrangea has rounded clusters of white sterile flowers up to 25cm across that fade to a pale lime green.
2.5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.



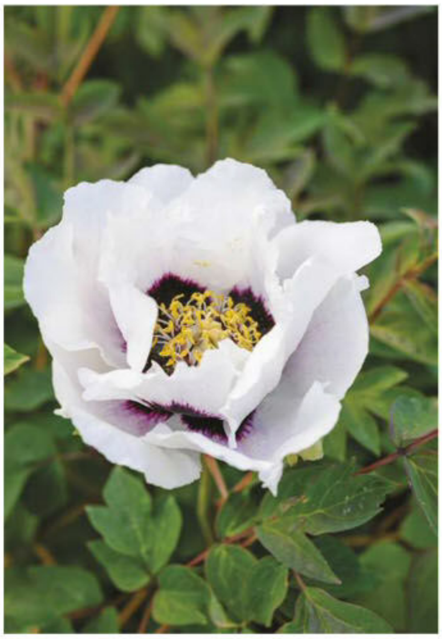
CHRIS BOSWORTH / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Rosa* Iceberg (= 'Korbin')**
A medium-sized rose with slightly fragrant, double, pure-white flowers that are sometimes tinged pink later in the season. It is robust, reliable and has a long flowering season. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9a.



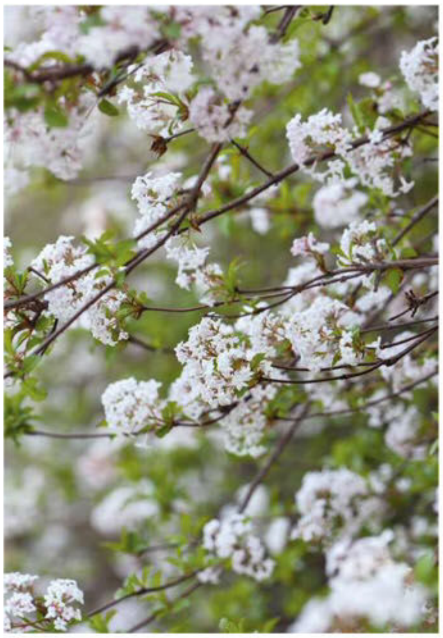
GARDEN WORLD IMAGES

***Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Center Glow'**
The young green and gold foliage matures deep burgundy leaves accompanied by clusters of white flowers. It's fast growing, and the older stems have attractive peeling bark. 2.4m. USDA 3a-7b.



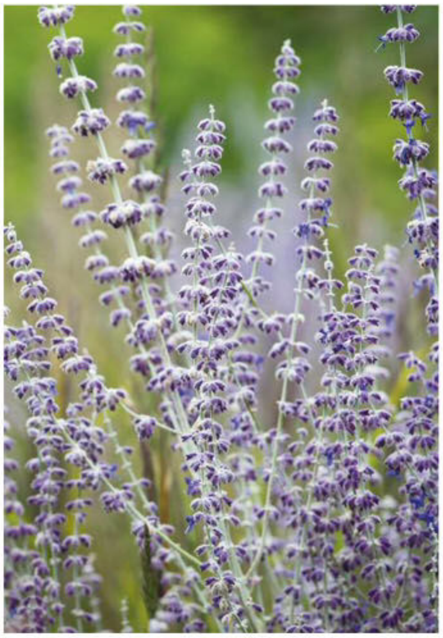
JASON INGRAM

Paeonia rockii
This aristocratic, deciduous shrub has deeply divided foliage and large, pure-white flowers up to 25cm across, with deep-purple blotches at the base. Needs space to grow. 2m. USDA 5a-9b.



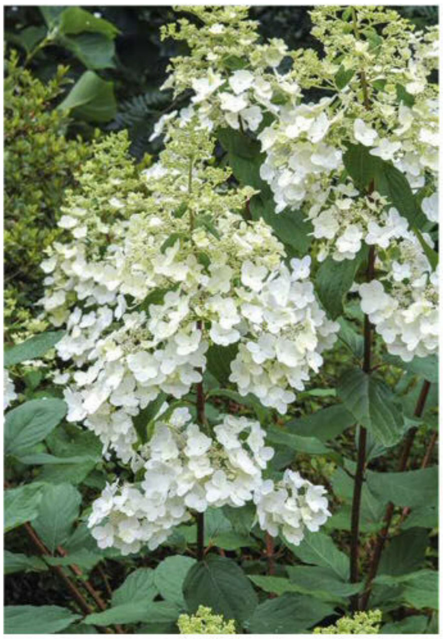
TOMMY TONSBERG / GAP PHOTOS

***Exochorda* x *macrantha* 'The Bride'**
A glorious shrub that has a dense, spreading habit. Its arching branches carry a profusion of white flowers on short spikes in mid to late spring followed by fiery autumn foliage. 2.5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.



JOANNA KOSSAK / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Perovskia* 'Blue Spire'**
A small, late-flowering, deciduous sub-shrub with white stems, grey-green leaves and large plumes of lavender-coloured tubular flowers in late summer and early autumn. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-10a.



PLANTOGRAPHY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Hydrangea paniculata* 'Le Vasterival'**
This floriferous shrub from the garden of Princess Greta Sturdza has clusters of small fertile flowers, dotted with larger plain white star- shaped florets that fade to deep pink in late summer. 2.4m. USDA 4a-8b.

Cultivation

- Create windbreaks on exposed sites to provide sheltered microclimates.
- Plant woody plants on slightly raised mounds in damp soil if you are unsure of their tolerance of waterlogging.
- Plant containerised trees and shrubs in square holes, slightly larger than the pot, then tease out the roots before planting.
- When planting woody plants in clay soils, make the planting hole slightly larger than the rootball – too large and it fills with water and may freeze. In other conditions the hole should be three times the size of the rootball.
- Plant in spring so there is time for plants to become established before the onset of colder weather.
- Protect plants of borderline hardiness by mulching around the roots, covering with horticultural fleece, growing in a sheltered, sunny position or under glass in colder climates, or in containers to be moved indoors in winter.

Hardiness

- Wherever possible, we've listed the hardiness ratings for plants, which give an indication of the plant's ability to endure cold conditions. Although several countries have their own plant hardiness ratings, we use the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) scale, which assigns plants to zones from 1 (very hardy) to 13 (least hardy), and the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), which runs in the opposite direction from H7 (very hardy) to H1a (least hardy), and tries to reflect the UK's garden conditions. You can find out more on both at gardensillustrated.com.
- The Swedish quality-assurance system for nursery plants, with the trademark 'E-planta', aims to find hardy, healthy plants, with superior ornamental value, that perform well in the tough Swedish climate. Plants are cultivated in different parts of the country and their performance is evaluated by experts. It is a collaboration between the largest nurseries, the Swedish Elite Plant Station and the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (eplanta.com).

Sweden's climate

In northern Sweden winter lasts from November to mid April, with average temperatures of between -5°C and -25°C, and snow for around four months. Recent winters have been warmer, with rain during the day and temperatures well below freezing at night – a catastrophe for perennials, which prefer dry snow. Stockholm experiences sub zero temperatures from December to March, usually with snow for two to three months, although the ground stays frozen for longer. Spring arrives late in May and is short. Daylight hours vary from around 19 hours in Stockholm to almost 24 hours in the north in midsummer, and between six hours and none in midwinter.

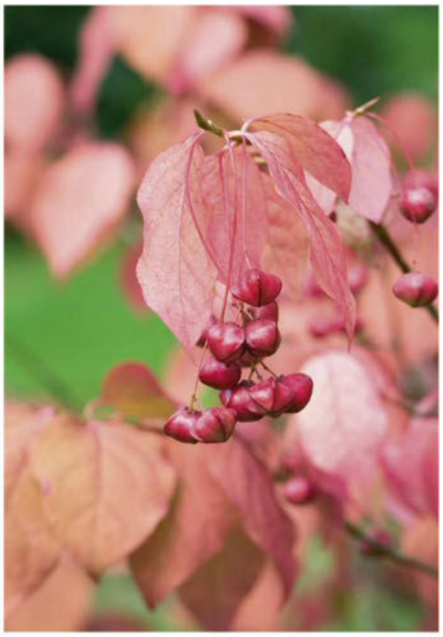
Where to buy

- **Bluebell Arboretum and Nursery,**
  Simsby, nr Ashby-de-la-Zouch,
  Derbyshire LE65 2TA.
  Tel 01530 413700,
  bluebellnursery.com
- **Crocus**
  Nursery Court, London Road,
  Windlesham, Surrey GU20 6LQ.
  Tel 01344 578000,
  crocus.co.uk
- **Knoll Gardens**
  Stapehill Road, Hampreston,
  Wimborne BH21 7ND.
  Tel 01202 873931,
  knollgardens.co.uk

Where to see

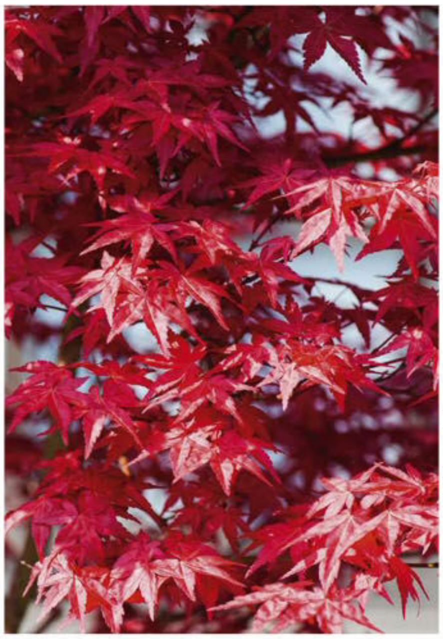
- **Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden**
  University of Tromso, Hansine Hansens
  veg 18, 9019 Tromsø, Norway.
  Tel +47 909 41714.
- **Drömparken**
  Munksundet, 745 31
  Enköping, Sweden.
- **RHS Garden Wisley**
  Wisley, Woking,
  Surrey GU26 3QB.
  Tel 0845 260 9000,
  rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley
- **Sir Harold Hillier Gardens**
  Jermyns Lane, Romsey,
  Hampshire SO51 0QA.
  Tel 01794 368407,
  ww3.hants.gov.uk/hilliergardens

Autumn



CLARE GAINEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

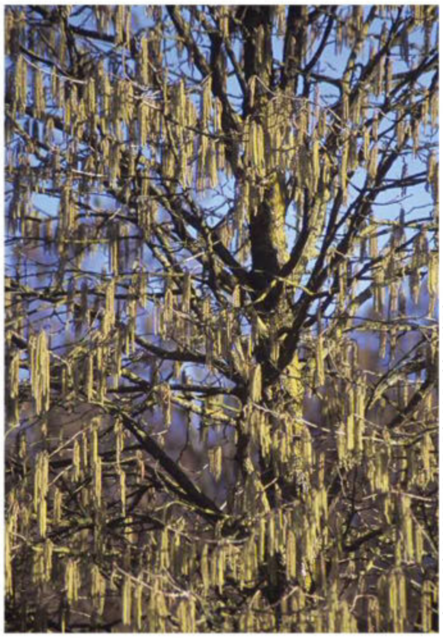
Euonymus planipes
This small, deciduous tree is renowned for its rich-red autumn colour and red fruits that burst open to reveal bright-orange seeds. 3m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.



TIM GAINEY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

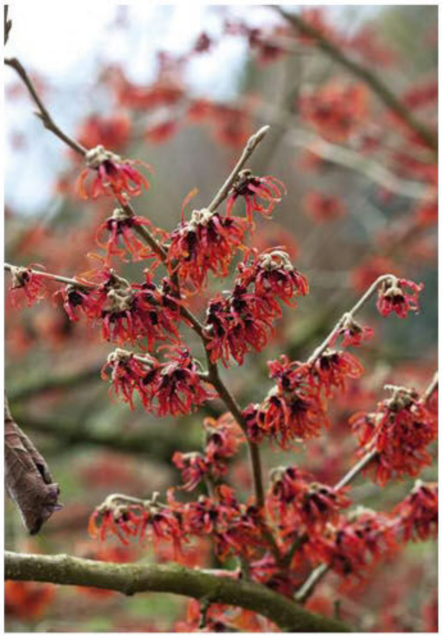
***Acer palmatum* 'Osakazuki'**
Rightly regarded as one of the finest Japanese maples, its leaves turn a brilliant orange and scarlet in autumn. 4m. AGM. RHS H6,USDA 5b-9a.

Winter



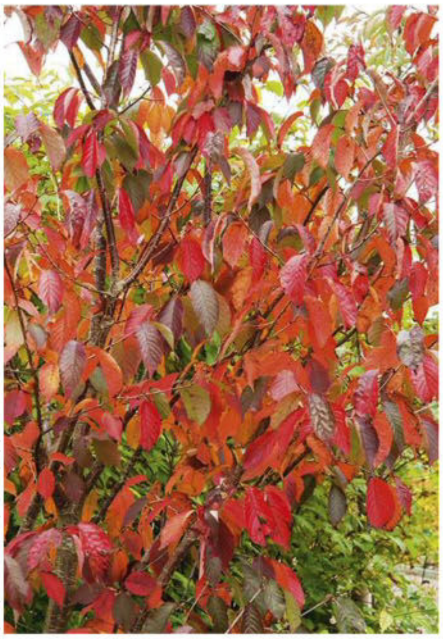
MICHELLE GARRETT / FP / THE GARDEN COLLECTION

Corylus colurna
A very symmetrical, beautifully architectural tree. The bark has corky corrugations, foliage is attractive and the nuts are edible. 24m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 4a-7b.

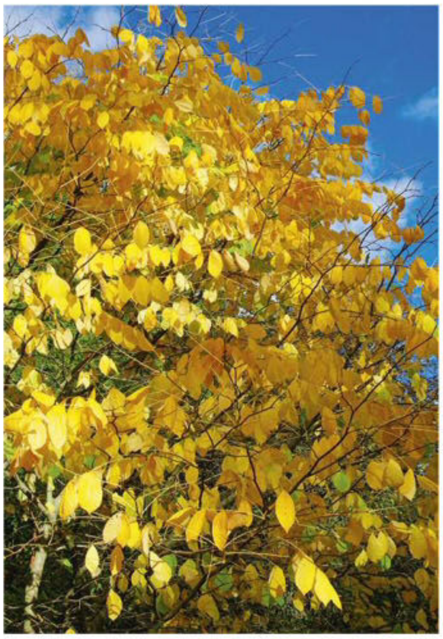


TOMMY TONSBERG / GAP PHOTOS

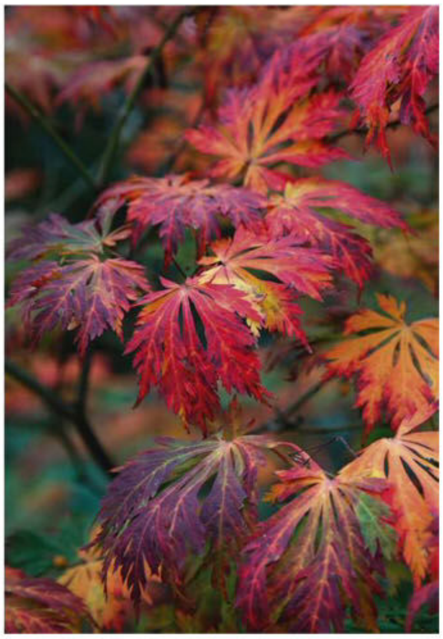
***Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Diane'**
An open, deciduous shrub with a broad crown, large leaves and rich red and yellow autumn colour. Unusual bronze-red flowers in winter. 4m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.


CAROLE DRAKE / GAP PHOTOS

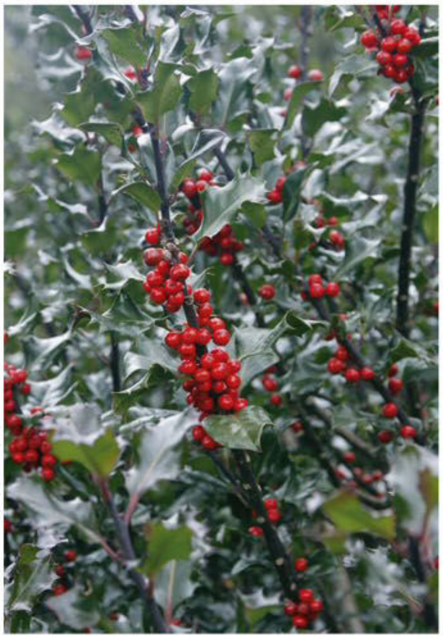
Prunus sargentii
Medium-sized tree with single, white-flushed pink flowers. Has fabulous orange-red foliage and is regularly one of the first to change colour. 20m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.


CORNERSTONE PHOTOS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

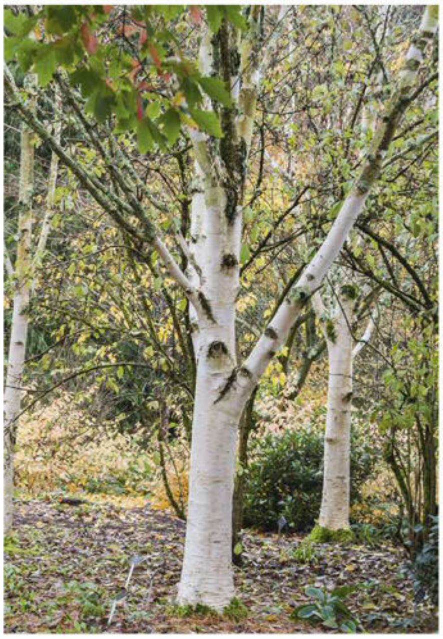
Cladrastis kentukea
Attractive medium-sized tree with smooth, grey bark and drooping, fragrant, white flowers hanging in clusters. Brilliant-yellow autumn foliage. 15m. USDA 4a-8b.


REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

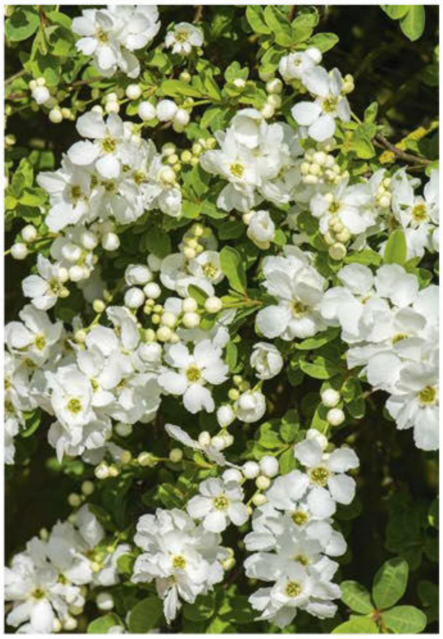
***Acer japonicum* 'Aconitifolium'**
One of the best maples for autumn colour, with leaves offering a multitude of hues. Can be grown as a spreading tree or shrub. 5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.


REX MAY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

***Ilex x meserveae* Blue Princess (= 'Conapri')**
A spreading, evergreen shrub with spiny, dark blue-green leaves and red berries. There is a male form called Blue Prince (= 'Conablu'). 2.5m. AGM. RHS H6, 4a-9b.


CAROLE DRAKE / GAP PHOTOS

***Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* 'Doorenbos'**
A gorgeous deciduous tree, with an elegant oval crown and white trunk and branches. The bark is fresh orange when it first peels. 15m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-7b.


GARY K SMITH / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Viburnum farreri
Fragrant, white flowers burst from pink buds, on terminal and side shoots followed by coppery leaves in spring. 3m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.

Ron Finley

He's been dubbed the Gansta Gardener but this rebel with a cause is on a mission to bring beauty to the streets of South LA and help its residents live well and stay healthy

WORDS CAROLINE BECK PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

On Ron Finley's business card is printed, 'RON – Head Trouble Maker'. One look at him, and you know he's only half-joking. He's a committed, charming subversive, his easy manner only just disguising his anger at the lack of access that poor people have to nutritious food in the richest country in the world. He grew up and still lives in the predominantly African-American and Latino suburb of South Los Angeles, a bleak landscape of derelict lots, more asphalt than green spaces, where levels of obesity, diabetes and heart disease in the population run at epidemic levels, so he has plenty to sound off about. His trouble making began in earnest when he planted an edible garden on the street where he lives, a calculated protest against the 'food desert' of his neighbourhood.

Ron is by training a fashion designer but after the crash of 2008 found himself short of work. He took a course in gardening in which he'd always been interested, and it made him think about the availability of fresh food locally. "In the 1990s we had lots of drive-by shootings here but now the people terrorising us are the fast-food companies. You can have four corners, and six fast food restaurants."

In 2010, infuriated at being forced to drive to another neighbourhood to buy an apple, he felt compelled to plant a productive garden on the parkway outside his apartment, a scrubby strip of land three metres wide and 45 metres long between the road and the pavement. He began in December and by the following May his exuberant garden was stopping the traffic. Neighbours marvelled at what he'd done, and began exchanging food for labour; passers-by commented on the pumpkins, peppers, sweetcorn, melons, kale and sunflowers growing there. But soon the news travelled all the way to LA's City Hall. Ron Finley was trespassing; gardening on derelict land that was, nevertheless, owned by the city and he found himself with a summons to appear in court, and an order to either buy a $400 permit for 'obstruction' or remove his offending garden entirely.

But Finley is a shrewd man. He wasn't just planting a garden he was making a political statement on inequality in America. South LA is just a few miles from one of the richest places in the world, Beverly Hills. "Districts like the one I live in are designed for confinement. We have poor education where children aren't taught any life skills, like gardening. They're just incubators for the prison system." He knew that there were plenty more affluent places where homeowners were flouting the city's rules governing the landscape, so why was he being singled out? He began a petition, then contacted a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*, Steve Lopez, who wrote an article on the madness of the authorities legally enforcing Finley to dig up his garden, which was by then providing food for half the street. In stepped the aptly named City Councillor, Herb Wesson, who saw sense, got the hearing suspended and then tweaked the city guidelines so that other people across the city could follow the edible gardening crusade. Finley went on to plant similar gardens across the city, putting in gardens in parks, shelters for the homeless and schools, pulling in the community with sheer charisma and a simple message – grow food, cook with it, live well and keep healthy.

In 2013 Finley, despite being dyslexic, gave a compelling and widely viewed TED talk telling of his transformation from curious grower to guerrilla gardener, and the social and health benefits of growing food. But he's not only a gardener. Yes, he has dirt under his fingernails (I checked), but he's primarily committed to growing people and ideas, challenging a system where the poor and landless are pitted against the supermarkets, fast-food giants and the multi-billion dollar agri-business. He's set himself a big task. "America has exported obesity and diabetes around the world and with the food companies being so powerful, we're under siege. They don't want us to grow our own food. Growing your own food is defiant – if you're doing it, it's gangsta."

Now he goes around the world, an evangelist for urban gardening, convincing particularly the young that gardening is cool and that if you grow a tomato you're more likely to eat it. "I've come to terms with the fact that although I love being in my garden, I change more people by talking to them about it than I do sitting in it." If he sometimes appears more messiah than market gardener, Ron Finley's rapid-fire delivery doesn't devalue his message that planting a seed is about so much more than food. It's an act of spirited rebellion. □

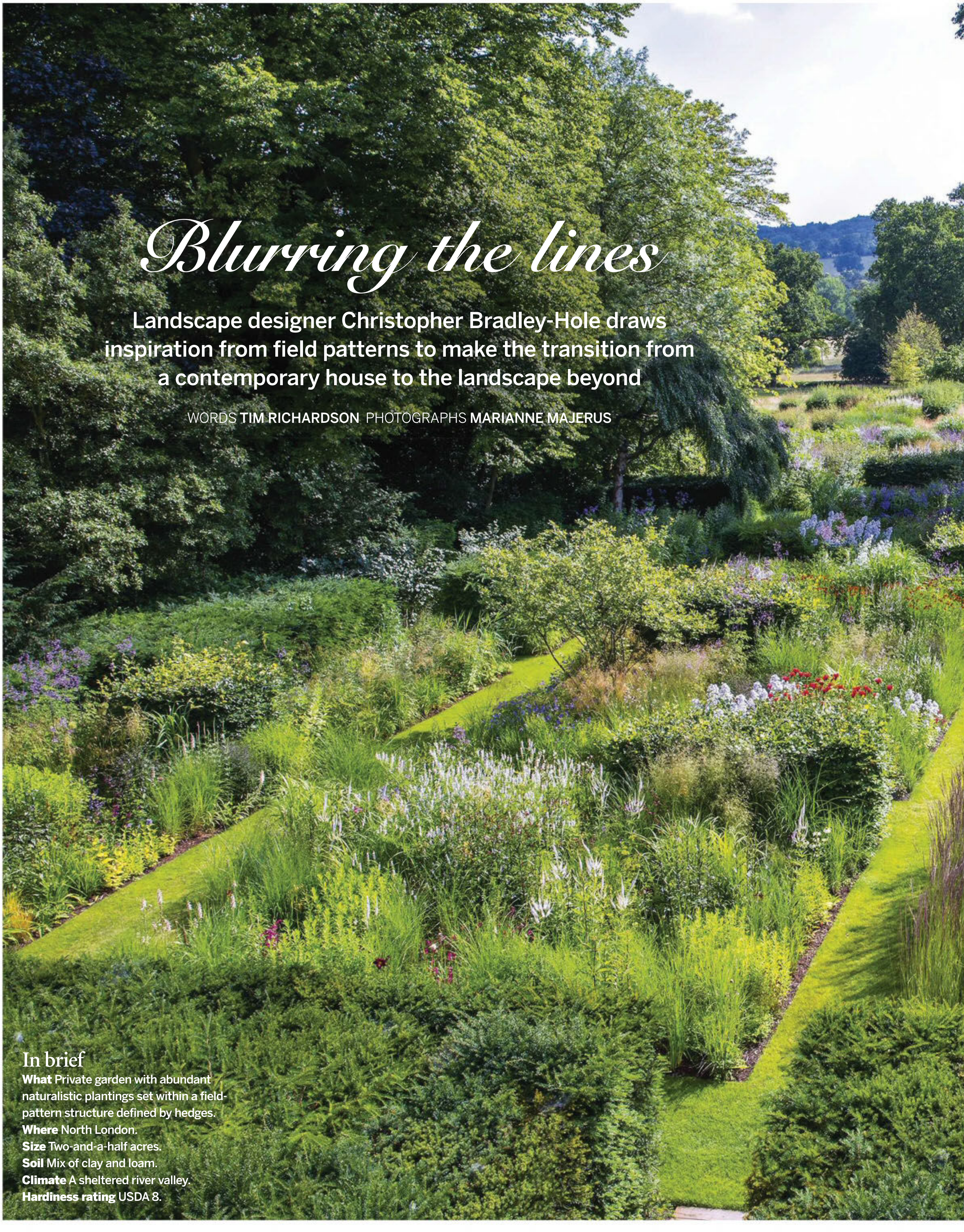
USEFUL INFORMATION

Discover more about Ron Finley's project to inspire change in communites across the USA at ronfinley.com

To find Ron's TED talk, search for his name on ted.com

NEXT MONTH Garden writer Val Bourne.

> *"Food companies don't want us to grow our own food. Growing your own food is defiant – if you're doing it, it's gangsta"*



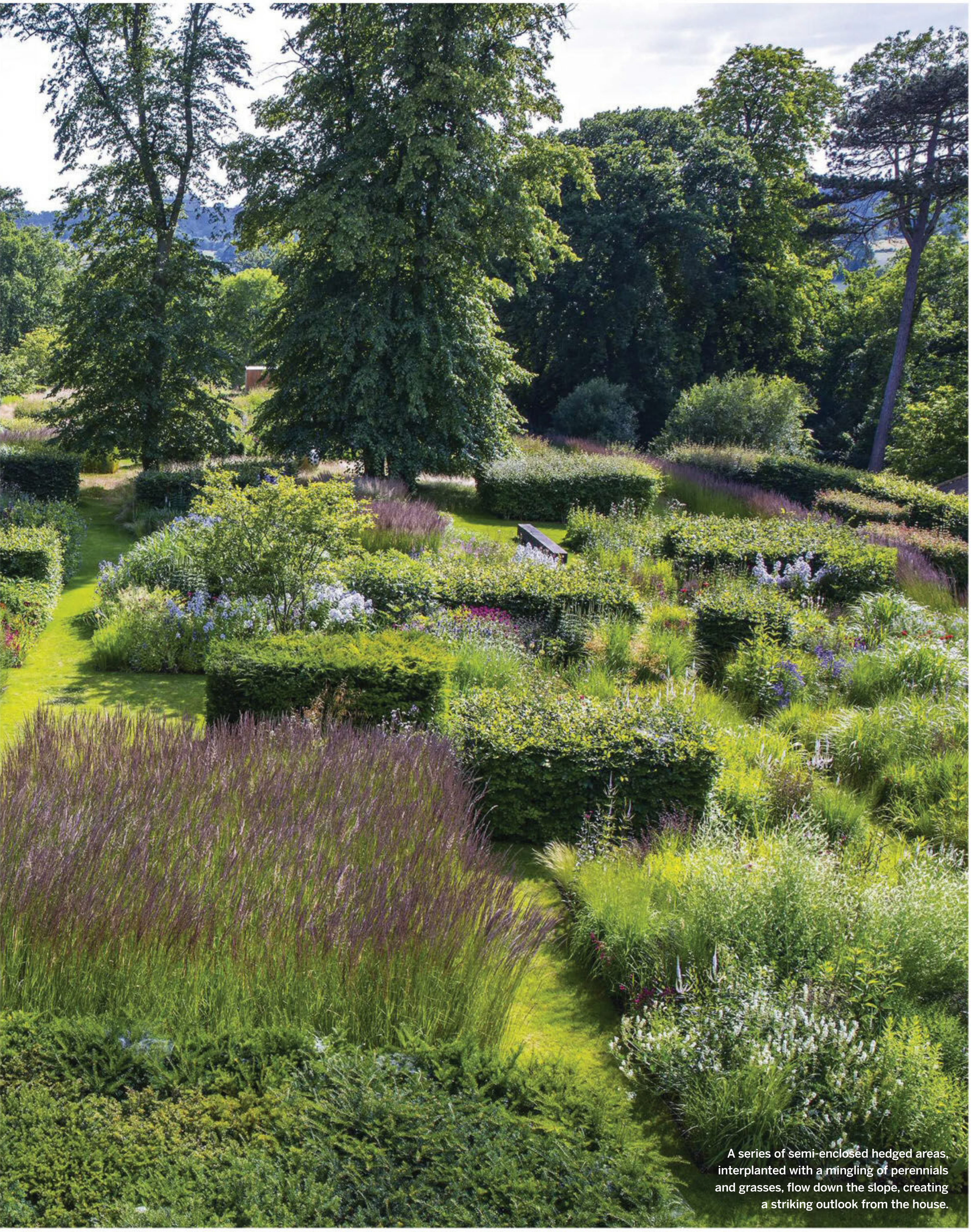
Blurring the lines

Landscape designer Christopher Bradley-Hole draws inspiration from field patterns to make the transition from a contemporary house to the landscape beyond

WORDS **TIM RICHARDSON** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**

In brief

What Private garden with abundant naturalistic plantings set within a field-pattern structure defined by hedges.
Where North London.
Size Two-and-a-half acres.
Soil Mix of clay and loam.
Climate A sheltered river valley.
Hardiness rating USDA 8.



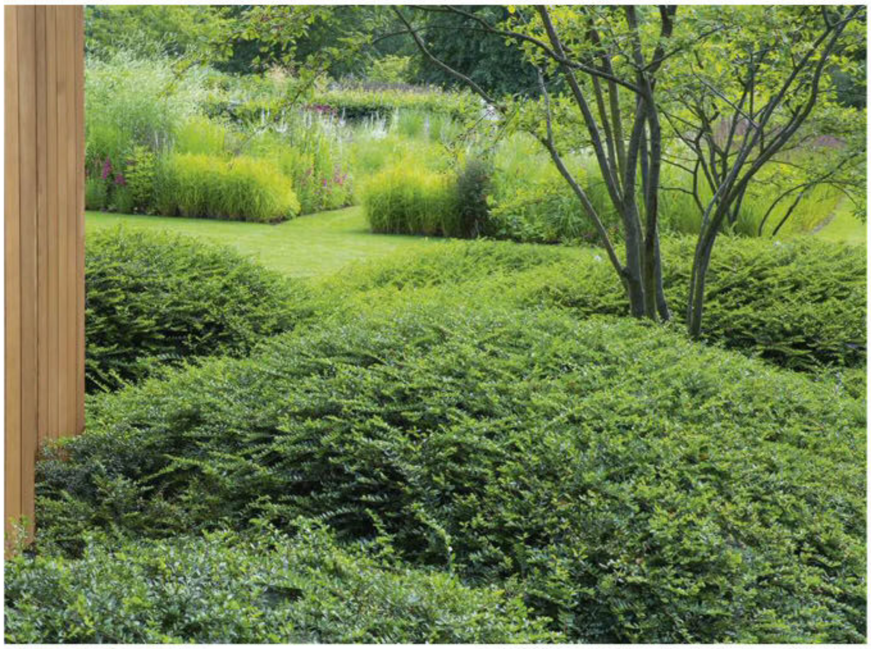
A series of semi-enclosed hedged areas, interplanted with a mingling of perennials and grasses, flow down the slope, creating a striking outlook from the house.

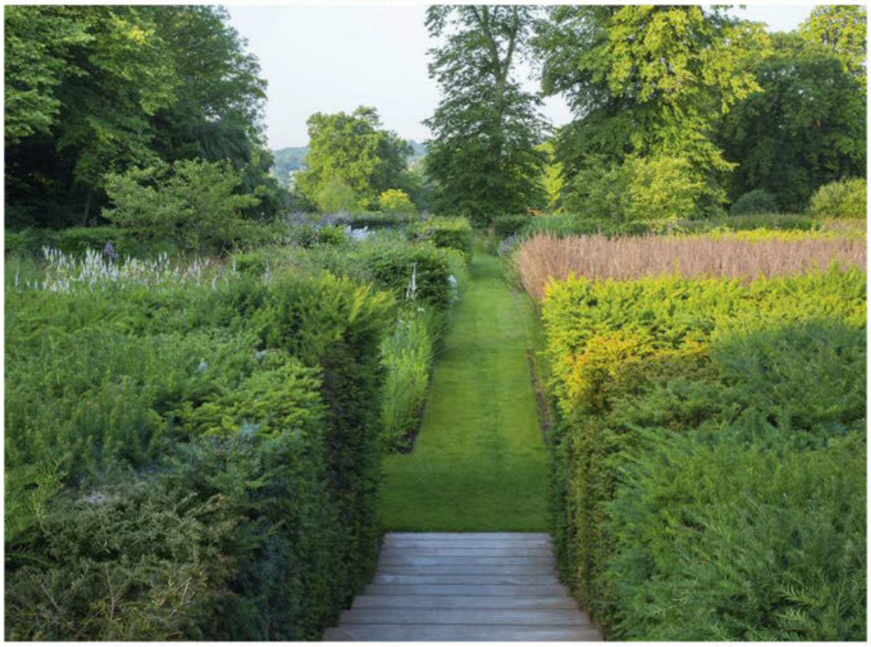
When I suggest to Christopher Bradley-Hole that the planting scheme at his latest extravaganza, a two-and-a-half-acre garden in north London, feels 'acutely familiar', I am uncertain as to how he is going to react. The point I'm trying to make is that I feel I have seen similar planting choices – *Veronicastrum*, *Sanguisorba*, *Thalictrum*, *Eupatorium*, *Phlomis*, *Calamagrostis*, *Achillea*, *Persicaria* and various fancy forms of cow parsley – in numerous gardens made by leading designers over the past few years, a reflection of the Piet Oudolf-approved naturalistic-herbaceous planting list.

It transpires I do not have cause to worry on this point. Christopher himself refers to a sense in the garden world that "we are all a bit perennial-ed out". He agrees that the challenge for designers now is to create original designs even while using a tried-and-tested planting palette within which it can be difficult to innovate.

Christopher has certainly achieved originality with this design, created in tandem with a revamped modernist house, newly clad with cedar. In fact the planting serves a rather old-fashioned purpose in that it populates and complements an underlying structure that represents the beating heart of the piece. That structure is founded on a series of hedges or buttresses, which although not arranged symmetrically conspire to create a series of semi-enclosed spaces filled with abundant plantings (see box right).

Close to the house the hedges are mainly yew, but as the garden widens out and, as Christopher puts it, "disperses itself" westwards down and into the valley, ▷





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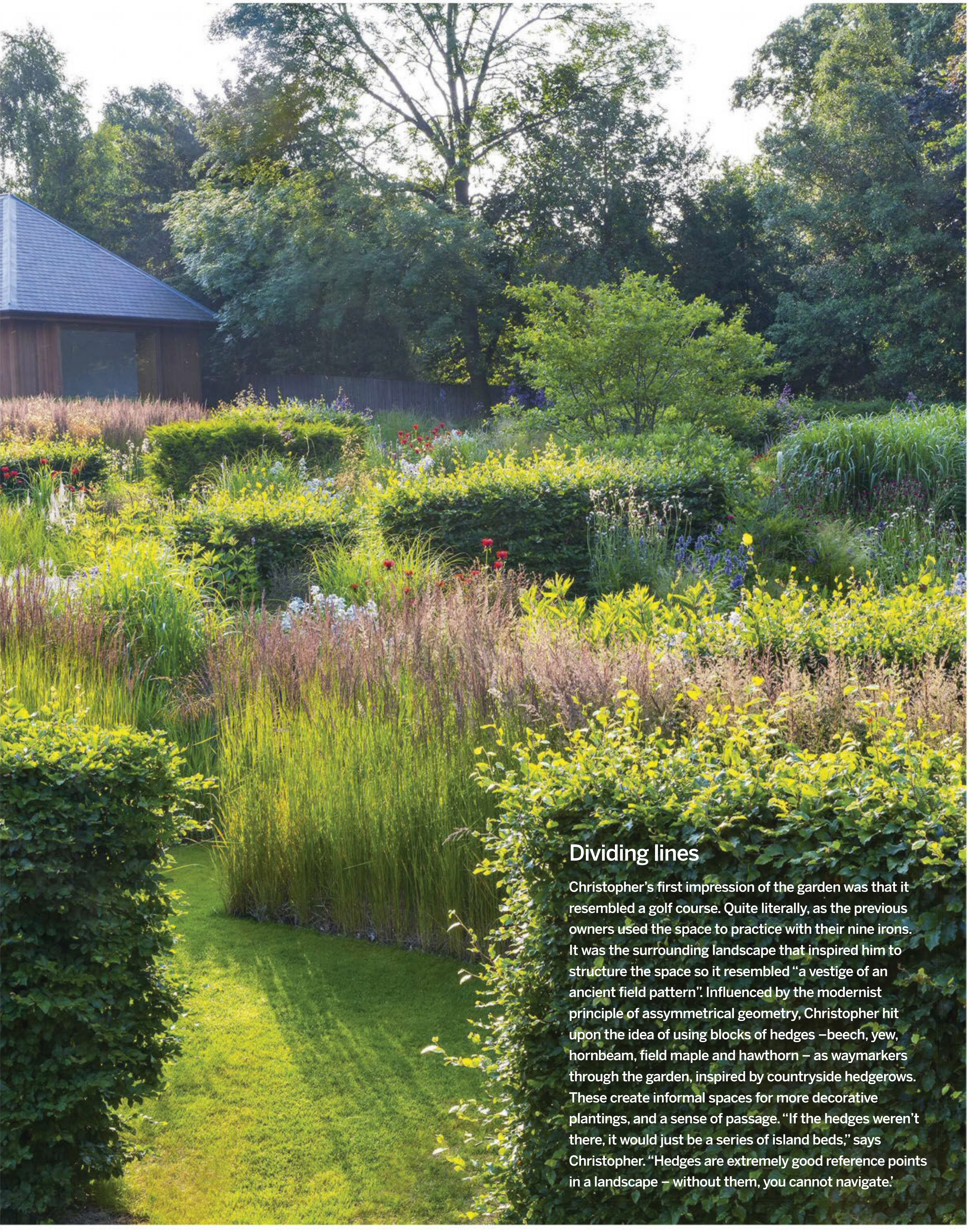
Mounds of *Lonicera nitida* 'Maigrün', interspersed with multi-stemmed *Amelanchier lamarckii*, frame the western facade of the house.

Planting schemes include deep copper-red *Helenium* 'Moorheim Beauty' along with airy *Thalictrum rochebruneanum* and the spires of *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Lavendelturm'.

Large blocks of hedging, on either side of the wooden steps leading from the house, direct the eye down the garden.



Dividing lines

Christopher’s first impression of the garden was that it resembled a golf course. Quite literally, as the previous owners used the space to practice with their nine irons. It was the surrounding landscape that inspired him to structure the space so it resembled “a vestige of an ancient field pattern”. Influenced by the modernist principle of assymmetrical geometry, Christopher hit upon the idea of using blocks of hedges –beech, yew, hornbeam, field maple and hawthorn – as waymarkers through the garden, inspired by countryside hedgerows. These create informal spaces for more decorative plantings, and a sense of passage. “If the hedges weren’t there, it would just be a series of island beds,” says Christopher. “Hedges are extremely good reference points in a landscape – without them, you cannot navigate.’

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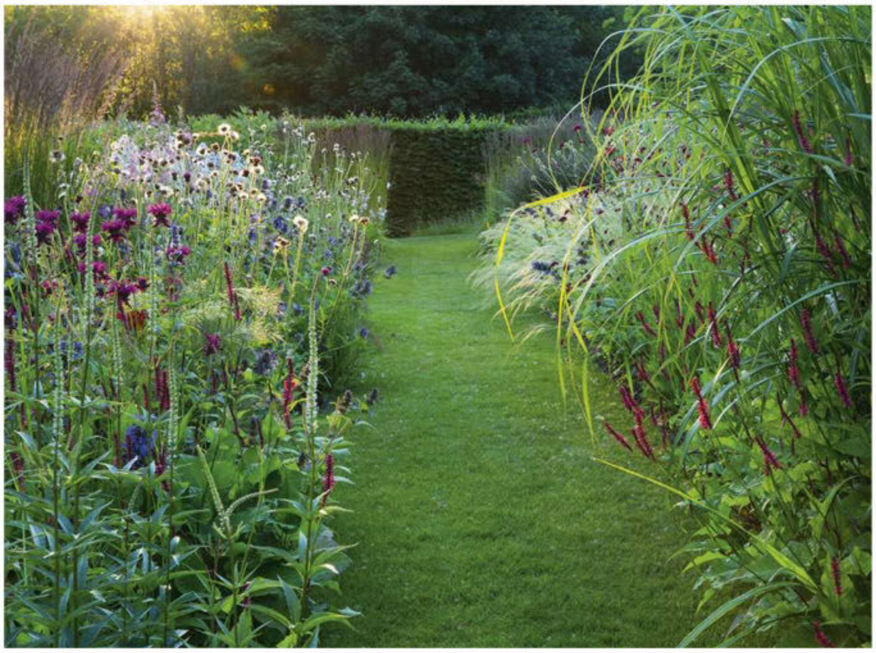
Calamagrostis x *acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', at the back of this perennial planting, creates a strong vertical accent – its wheat-like form echoing the agricultural setting.

Fulsome planting set against structured hedging is key to the garden's design.

The fresh green of the grass *Molinia caerulea* subsp. *caerulea* 'Moorhexe' is interspersed with rich purple *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna', reminding us that even the loosely planted areas are still carefully controlled.



REALIMAGE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

▷ they may become buttresses of beech, hornbeam or hawthorn. The hedges lend a certain stillness and solidity to a design that is otherwise full of movement and the inherent changefulness of herbaceous plantings.

From the house the impression is almost of an uninterrupted, super-verdant meadow while from within the garden there is a sense of progression and rhythm, as new spaces and varied plant combinations are constantly revealed. Stand-out flowering plants include *Salvia*, several *Monarda* cultivars, *Phlox*, *Persicaria*, *Veronicastrum* and, late in the season, the silver plumes of *Miscanthus*. Then there are carefully placed surprises, such as a burst of orange *Kniphofia* or some purple echinacea. "It's really an agricultural landscape in that it is not too refined," says Christopher. "I wanted to get away from rather precious geometry. The key is continuation from one space to the next."

There are clever touches, such as the wide yew hedge that abuts at ground level the smooth terrace with its shallow rectangular pool, to cope with a considerable drop from terrace to garden, but the most original passage in the garden is the transition from the dense plantings closer to the house into a more meadowy area where natural grass has largely been left *in situ*. The hedge system continues, but a number of oaks, chestnuts, limes, ash and other mature trees in this far western section of the garden lend it an unbuttoned, informal feel, which is most affecting in a garden of subtle effects and gentle transitions. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Christopher Bradley-Hole Landscape Design.
Tel 020 8939 1748.
Web christopherbradley-hole.co.uk

Author Tim Richardson will be speaking at the ***Gardens Illustrated* Festival** in Tetbury. See page 8 for details or visit gardensfestival.com

Changing styles

Christopher Bradley-Hole feels his work has changed over the years in two distinct ways. "One is that I am now very engaged with the idea of the experience of landscape, of how you move through it," he says. "The second is that I am now more interested in formal, classically influenced architectural space – not so much the abstractions of modernism I was brought up with. I always wanted dynamism and a feeling of movement in my gardens. Now I think that calmness is more important to me." Like many established landscape designers, Christopher is also expressing a deeper affinity with the wider landscape, and seeking to honour that in his work in larger domestic gardens. A visit to Japan in 2011 also proved revelatory. What did he find so inspiring? "It was everything – the whole way of life. The slowing down and thinking. The temple gardens and tea ceremony was a big experience for me; I appreciated it. That idea of certain things being precious. Then I went to see Tadao Ando's work. He took the tradition of Japanese architecture but used it in a very modern way, with no sense of pastiche."

At the fringes of the garden, the planting becomes positively meadow-like. Simple mown pathways lead down to an almost hidden writing hut.

West side glory

In his plant lover's paradise near Portland, Oregon, Sean Hogan specialises in the drought-tolerant plants that are native to America's west coast

WORDS NOËL KINGSBURY PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS

In brief

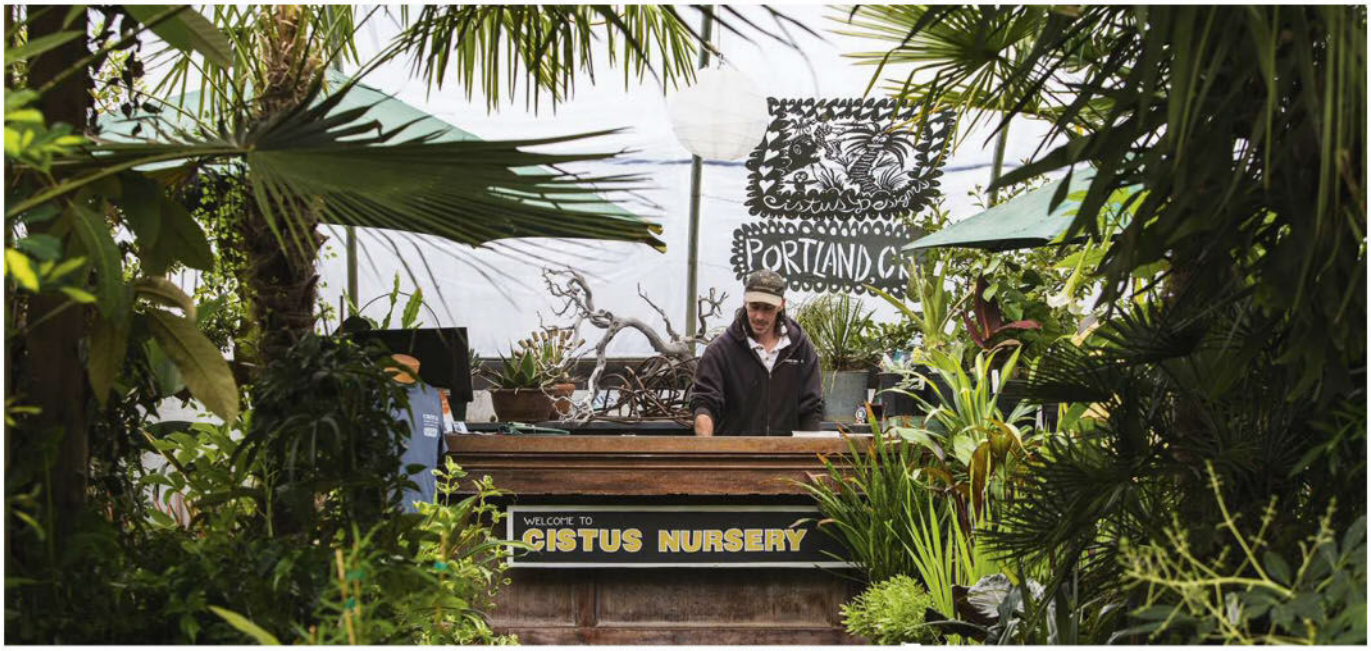
Name Cistus Nursery.
What Nursery that offers a huge range of weird and wonderful plants, including borderline hardy, exotic and dramatic plants, many natives of west coast of USA.
Where Near Portland, Oregon.
Size Five acres.
Soil Sandy loam.
Climate Mediterranean, with very wet winters and hot, dry summers.
Hardiness rating USDA 8b.

Cistus offers a vast range of cacti, ideal for Portland's dry summers. Although they need some protection from winter wet, many, including the *Opuntia* species, or prickly pear, are hardy to -40°C if kept dry.

Portland, Oregon, has a reputation for being one of the best places in North America to live. It is certainly a good place to be a gardener, with its Mediterranean climate – wet winters and warm dry summers – and if hiking through wild flower-rich scenery appeals, there is an amazing range of habitats within an hour's drive. It's not surprising then to discover the city has one of the world's most vibrant gardening cultures, and in Cistus one of its most exciting nurseries too.

"What we have is a bit of a destination," says Cistus's proprietor Sean Hogan. "We're about ten miles from the city, but we have a lot of visitors from San Francisco and British Columbia. On the perfect Saturday it becomes a little like a cocktail party; you never know who you are going to bump into." The five-acre plot is arranged around regional or climatic themes, such as Mediterranean zone, Southern Hemisphere, and more aesthetic ones such as 'hardy tropicals'.

It's fair to say many of Cistus's customers are what might be called plant nuts, although others, according to Sean, are new to gardening or from elsewhere in the USA and are new to Portland's climate. "They have a problem understanding that it stops raining in spring and doesn't start again until after Halloween," says Sean of Portland newcomers. "It it is difficult for people to transition from a garden that has always been watered to a dry garden. You can lose a lot." His strategy is to suggest a mix of plants that are what he describes as "crunchy on the outside and soft on the inside". The 'outside' refers to the tough, evergreen and often aromatic shrubs that are drought tolerant and which should form the bulk of planting, while ▷

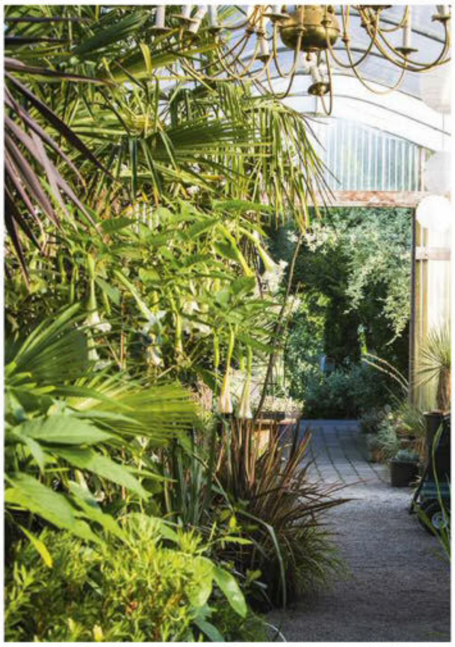


▷ the 'inside' refers to the thirstier plants that can be placed in sheltered locations close to a house.

Sean has plenty of experience of what grows well in and around Portland. He was born in the city and, aside from a spell in California, working first for the Forest Service and then as curator of the University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley, he has lived here most of his life. "My mother was interested in natural history," he says. "There was also a keen alpine grower in the neighbourhood and someone else who was always replanting his borders, so I grew up thinking it was normal to be a plant geek." Sean also spent a lot of time out in the wild and developed a passion for native plants.

When he returned from California in 1995 to set up a garden design business, Sean was frustrated by the lack of regional flora grown commercially. Although there are more than 1,000 nurseries in the Portland area, they mostly grow plants to sell to customers on the US east coast. "Up to 90 per cent of the country's woody plants are produced around here," says Sean. "But I used to have a really hard time finding western native, drought-tolerant plants. I was compelled to start raising them myself in small batches if I wanted to use them in projects."

Eventually, Sean, and his late partner Parker Sanderson, bowed to the inevitable and opened their own nursery, in 1998. "We were lucky to find some ▷



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE

A screen by the graphic artist Mark Bulwinkle hangs above the front desk at Cistus.

At the end of an aisle flanked by drought-tolerant plants, including yuccas and myrtles, is a building Sean calls Fetish, which houses small rarities.

Another of Mark Bulwinkle's illustrations adds a humorous touch to the nursery's signage.

This distinctive shrub, *Arctostaphylos viscida*, with its peeling bark, is native to the west coast.

The gnarled trunk of an *Eucalyptus perriniana* is surrounded by shrubs, yuccas and colourful flowers including the blue *Eryngium variifolium*.

Succulents and cacti, including *Agave americana* 'NoPo', with its spiky leaves shielded by corks, and the spectacular *Yucca rostrata* 'Sapphire Skies' behind, occupy a corner of a retail greenhouse.

A chandelier adds a touch of glamour to the retail greenhouse known as Big Top.

Cistus
PLANT NERD CROSSING
SLOW TO 10MPH

Local colour

Around 25-30 per cent of the plants Cistus grows are native to this part of the USA, including several that are endemic to the area. The northwest USA sees incredible changes in temperature and rainfall regimes, and one side of a mountain range may have a totally different flora to the other side. One factor, though, that links all plants native to the Pacific coast – from the top of the Baja Peninsula in Mexico to southwest British Columbia in Canada – is that they will all tolerate summer drought conditions.

With water-saving plants high on the agenda for many American gardeners, there is clearly sense in concentrating on these tough locals, but Sean has another reason for specialising in these native plants. "I would just love it," he says, "if when you land at Portland Airport, there was something planted there that made you realise this is Oregon not New Jersey." Among the regional icons Cistus promotes are several *Arctostaphylos* species (see left). These distinctive grey-leaved shrubs with their sinuous, bending, cinnamon-peeling bark, are very resilient, if slow to establish, and they hate being overwatered. So perfect for water-starved gardens.

Several sizes of blue-green *Yucca rostrata* 'Sapphire Skies' nestle beneath the leaves of a jelly palm, *Butia capitata*.

▷ 150-year-old greenhouses in our neighbourhood," Sean recalls. The nursery's reputation grew, and not only for native plants. When the City of Portland created a Chinese Garden in collaboration with its twin city of Suzhou (famous for its Song Dynasty gardens), Sean sourced the plants – all Chinese natives – for the site.

So successful was the nursery that in 2004 it needed to expand and moved to its current location on Sauvie Island, northwest of the city. Aside from the plants, part of its appeal is its slightly wacky west-coast style. There are several artworks by Mark Bulwinkle, famous for his crazy cats and insanely grinning plants that are plasma-gunned into sheet steel. Mark, an old friend of Sean's, also designed the nursery logo and merchandising. He and Sean, along with artist Marcia Donahue [see issue 108, p54] were once part of a group of California-based gardeners known as the Hortisexuals, who, in true west-coast style, aimed to shake the garden world up a little bit. Something Sean continues to strive towards at Cistus, making Portland truly one of the best places to be a gardener. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Cistus Nursery, 22711 NW Gillihan Road, Portland, OR 97231, USA.
Tel +1 (503) 621 2233.
Web cistus.com
Open Every day. See website for details.

8 of Sean's favourite plants from Cistus

1 *Arbutus arizonica* 'Chiri'
A small tree, collected by Sean in the Chiricahua Mountains of southeast Arizona, which has richly coloured exfoliating bark. It's drought tolerant but is not affected by the higher moisture levels that might damage the related madrones. 15m. RHS H6, USDA 5[†].

2 *Pittosporum patulum*
With black leaves on upright stems, this small tree from New Zealand might look dead to some. "One for goth gardeners," says Sean. 4m. USDA 7a-8b.

3 *Dahlia* 'Cistus Purity'
A white double dahlia with dark leaves and a tiny spot of red. 1.5m. USDA 9.

4 *Eucalyptus perriniana*
Known as the spinning gum tree because its leaves, when dead, detach from the stem and can spin around the twigs. Fast-growing, but can be coppiced. 10m. USDA 7a-11.

5 *Datisca cannabina*
A lush perennial for the late summer border. It is an essay in green and takes up only a small space at its base despite its size. 2.5m. USDA 6a-10b.

6 *Pittosporum illicioides* 'Strappy'
An evergreen shrub with an upright habit. In summer it has fragrant, white flowers, followed in autumn by black fruit in orange capsules. Prefers light shade; dislikes drought conditions. 5m. USDA 8.

7 *Fatsia polycarpa* 'Needham's Lace'
Thisine-leaved form of the popular group of spectacular foliage plants related to ivy, is named after the British plant collector Edward Needham. Prefers dappled shade. 5m. USDA 7a-8b.

8 *Trachelospermum asiaticum* 'Theta'
Named for Sean's mother, this evergreen climber remains permanently juvenile with silver-centred leaves. These are complemented by heavily scented flowers. Best in sun and fertile soil. 7m. USDA 8.

[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.

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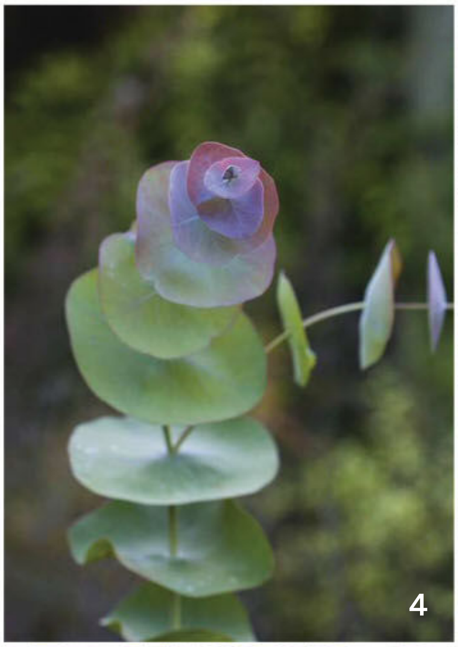
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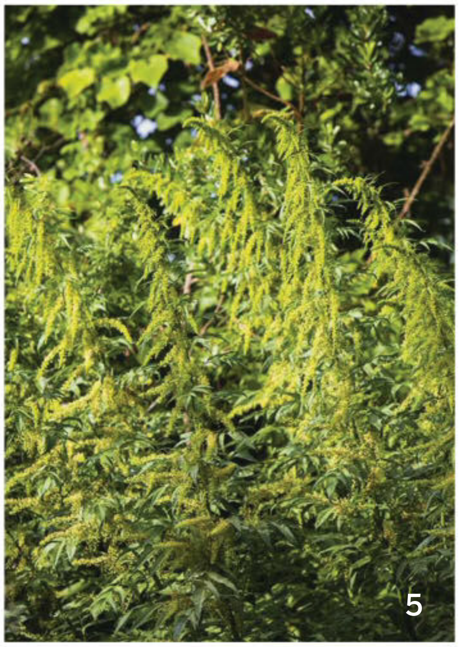
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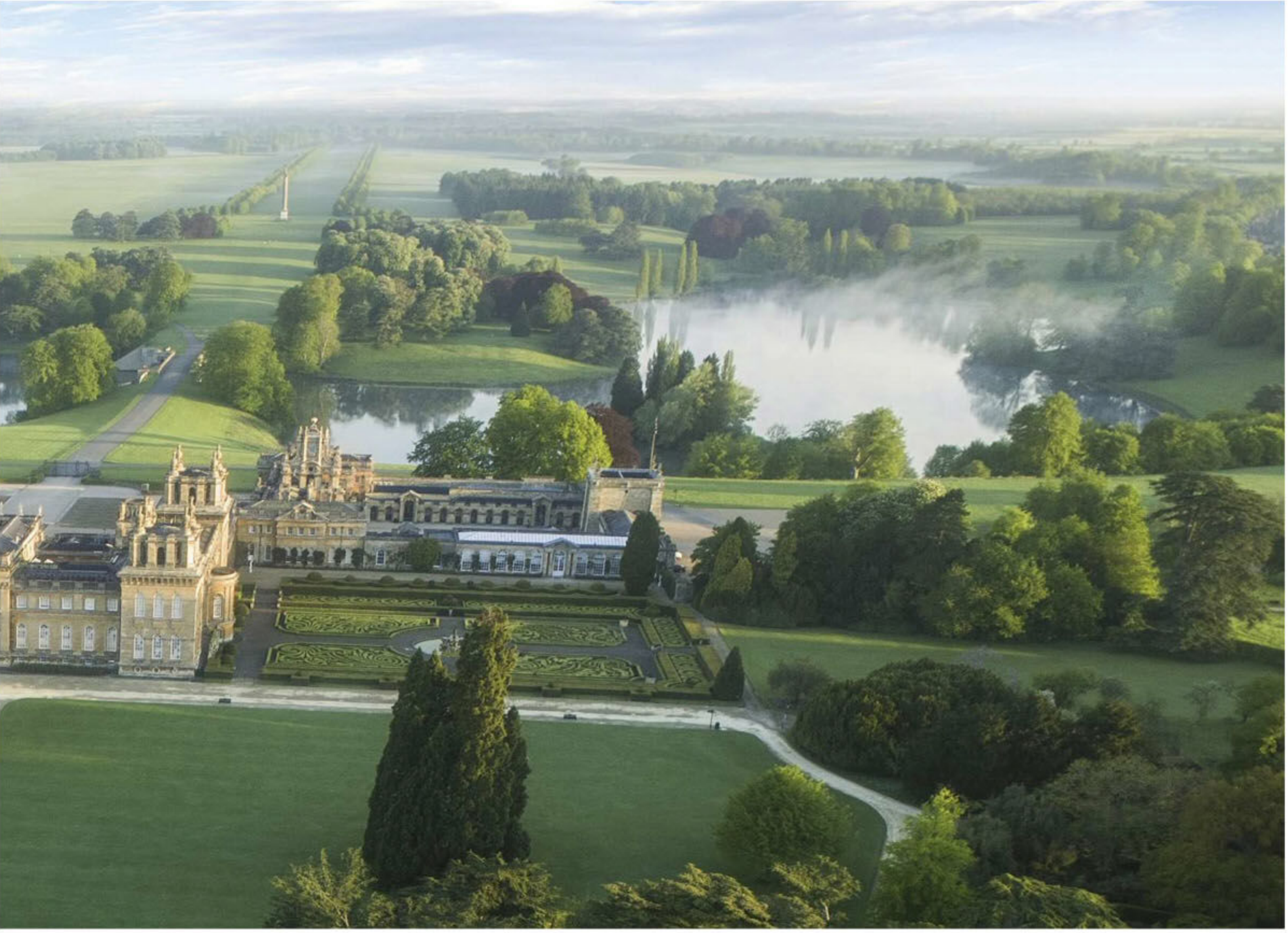
England's greatest landscape visionary?

Blenheim, Chatsworth, Bowood, Croome…
So many of England's most cherished landscapes are the
work of a single man. Now, 300 years on, we ask if,
and why, we should still revere Lancelot 'Capability' Brown

WORDS AMBRA EDWARDS

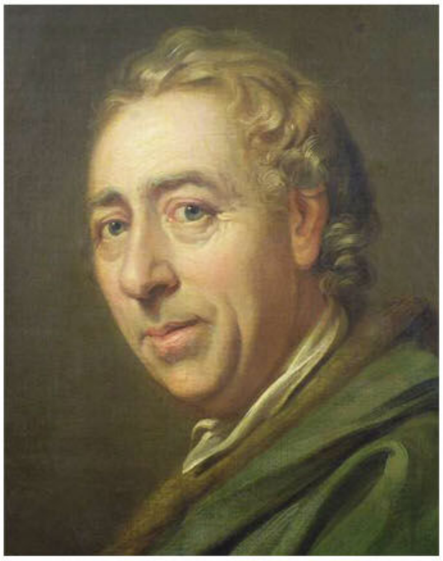


This year we celebrate the tercentenary of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown – the great 18th-century place-maker, tree-planter, sculptor of land and master of water – marking it with tours, talks, study days and teas the length and breadth of England. (Brown also made a handful of landscape gardens in Scotland and Wales, but reputedly declined to go to Ireland on the grounds he 'had not yet finished England'.) The celebration is largely the brainchild of Johnny Phibbs, of Debois Landscape Survey Group, who as an 18th-century specialist has been working on Brown's landscapes for nearly 40 years – exploring them, restoring them, even exporting them to Moscow.

Phibbs has been appalled by the routine indifference of planning authorities to Brown's legacy, the readiness with which his smoothly contoured hills and limpid waters have been obliterated by housing estates, golf courses and motorways. He believes it is Brown's sheer productivity that is to blame – the industrious Northumbrian probably worked on half a million acres over the course of 30 years. Some 270 landscapes have now been attributed to him, of which, says Phibbs, "perhaps 200 remain worth looking at, 170 well worth looking at". But here's the rub: half the time we don't even know we're looking at them. As Brown's obituarist presciently observed, 'so closely did he copy nature that his works will be mistaken'.

So can such a ubiquitous and low-key heritage really be worth celebrating? Of course, insists Phibbs, because Brown's compositions are so self-evidently better than anyone else's. They have a clarity and coherence that is profoundly satisfying. Or, as landscape guru Dominic Cole puts it, "His landscapes are easy on the eye: they have scale,

▷



Above Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, painted by Richard Cosway in around 1770.

Top Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire has been called Brown's masterwork. Its magnificent Grand Lake was created by damming the River Glyme.

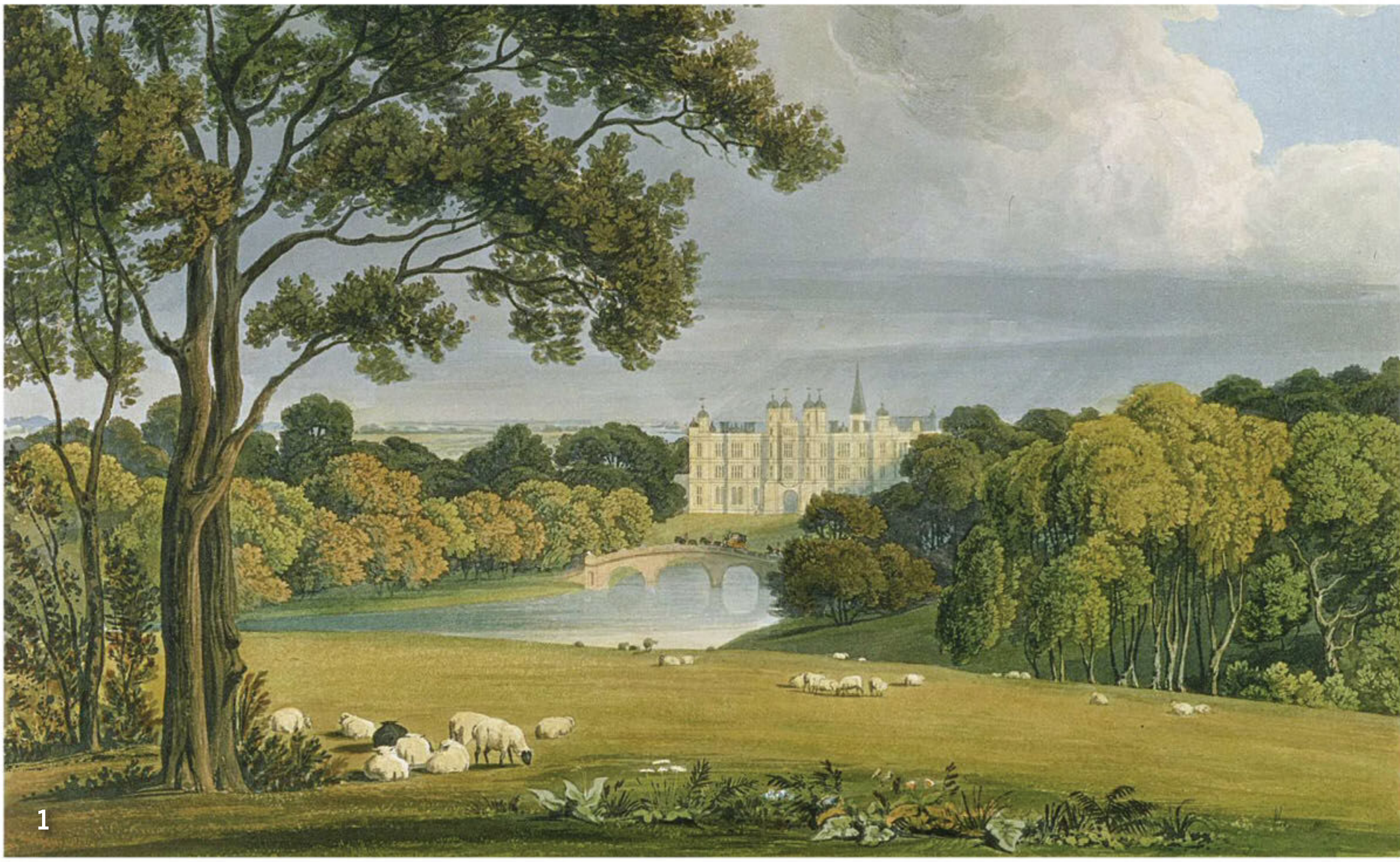
PETE SEAWARD; © PORTRAIT OF LANCELOT 'CAPABILITY' BROWN, C.1770-75, COSWAY, RICHARD (1742-1821)/PRIVATE COLLECTION/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES.

1 This view of **Burghley House** by Frederick Mackenzie in 1819 sums up the quintessential Brown style – rolling swards, belts of trees, water spanned by a noble bridge and grazing animals for animation.

2 The plans for **Heveningham Hall** in Suffolk were one of Brown's last projects, drawn up in 1783 only weeks before he died. They included an ambitious proposal to return the River Blyth to its mediaeval meanders.

3 In 1995, landscape architect Kim Wilkie finally realised Brown's plans for **Heveningham Hall**, recreating water meadows and planting new areas of broadleaf woodland every year, creating a new sustainable landscape.

4 At **Chatsworth House** in Derbyshire, Brown removed the great formal terraces and fountains, planted trees and altered the course of the River Derwent to create parkland that has altered very little to this day.



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Visionary or vandal?

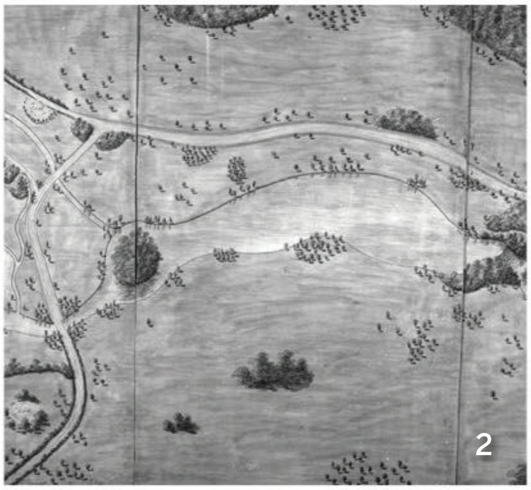
Some have laid a charge of wholesale destruction at Brown's door. He's been accused of sweeping away the formal landscapes of the 17th century, and displacing hapless villagers who marred the view. In fact, the fussy, embroidered gardens based on French and Dutch models were already out of fashion before Brown began to realise his vision. And Brown's master plans have to be seen within the context of field enclosures, and the wholesale reform of agricultural practice that was taking place at the end of the 18th century.

Where everything around them was changing, villagers might well regard better housing stock on drier ground as a change for the better. At Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire, for example, three villages are included in the estate.

▷ balance, animation, with animals grazing and winding carriage drives to take us around to appreciate the full 3D picture." It's country life in 18th-century 'Sensurround', but with the everyday muck and messiness miraculously edited out. More than that, Brown came to express what Phibbs terms "some kind of aboriginal Englishness" – an Englishness explicitly identified with the values of liberty, tolerance and democracy (as opposed to French tyranny and autocracy, symbolised by the grandiloquent formal landscapes of André Le Nôtre). And so successful was he, that he has infiltrated our national consciousness: our notion today of what is beautiful in English landscape is an idealisation created by Brown.

Brown was no revolutionary. He was working within established taste, arguably bringing the ideas of his predecessors Charles Bridgeman and William Kent to their logical conclusion, and in so doing, creating a new art form worthy to stand alongside the greatest of literature and art. His uniqueness lay in being so supremely good at his job. Historian Steffie Shields points out his excellence as an engineer, his skill at manipulating water, how assiduously he built on the ideas of early 18th-century garden designer Stephen Switzer who wrote of 'mixing the useful and profitable parts of Gard'ning with the Pleasurable'. For Brown's landscapes were profoundly practical. Lakes provided fish as well as a glittering view; tree belts were valuable not only for shelter, but timber and game. The acres of grass were fuel for horses, while the sheep that grazed the swards furnished manure for arable land. (During Brown's lifetime, arable production increased by 50 per cent without any rise in acreage.)

It is this productivity, and the beauty inherent within it, that in landscape architect Kim Wilkie's eyes gives the Brownian landscape meaning and resonance. Brown's legacy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It is this productivity, and the beauty inherent within it, that gives the Brownian landscape meaning and resonance

should be understood not in terms of style, but as "a fundamental attitude towards mankind and land and nature – one expressed very radically in landscape, where science, philosophy and stewardship all come together," asserts Wilkie.

"He was the most accomplished place-maker of his time, at a really critical moment when scientific and cultural thought was undergoing a revolution in England." This he interprets as a reawakening, led by Isaac Newton, Alexander Pope and the Augustan poets, of the Renaissance concept of man in the universe. When man sees himself as an integral part of nature rather than its overlord, it alters his relationship with both God and the land. Nature is no longer to be feared and dominated, but cherished: the land becomes something to tend and celebrate. It is a response, Wilkie suggests, to an increasingly urbanised society. Far from being of merely historical interest, Brown's engagement with the management of water and the long-term stewardship of the land could scarcely be more relevant today.

Wilkie has a special understanding of Brown's place in the modern world for in 1995, at Heveningham Hall in Suffolk, he began implementing a design for 2,000 acres of parkland, drawn up by Brown shortly before he died. The experience was revelatory.

"He was just so good at it: he could ride round for a couple of hours and know exactly what to do. The intense subtlety of what he did and its power on the land was such an ▷

1 STAPLETON COLLECTION / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES; 2 *COUNTRY LIFE* IMAGES; 3 ROB ORFORD / MILES WATER ENGINEERING; 4 MATTHEW BULLEN; NT IMAGES / JAMES DOBSON

Timeline

1716 Lancelot Brown born at Kirkharle in Northumberland, the fifth of six children of William Brown, a yeoman farmer, and Ursula, who had worked in the house on the Kirkharle Estate. He is christened on 30 August.

1732 Employed as a gardener on the Kirkharle Estate, where he is taken under the wing of employer Sir William Loraine and learns his trade.

1739 Moves south, and within two years is appointed head gardener at the great emblematic garden of Stowe, working for Lord Cobham under landscape architect William Kent. Here he extends the Grecian Valley in what will become his distinctive naturalistic style.

1750 Begins his first major commission at Croome Court (above), remodelling the house, draining the marshy grounds, resiting the church and creating a lake on 'as hopeless a spot as any in the island'.

1751 Moves with his family to Hammersmith, at the time a Thameside village known for its nurseries, where he lives for the next 14 years.

1754 Begins work at Burghley House in Northamptonshire, where he continues to make improvements until his death. He writes: 'This is a great place, where I have had 25 years pleasure in restoring the monument of a great minister [William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer to Elizabeth I] to a great queen.'

1757 Begins work on parkland at Longleat, Wiltshire, sweeping away celebrated formal and fruit gardens.

1763 Begins work at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, remodelling 2,000 acres and damming the River Glyme to create a fitting setting for the palace.

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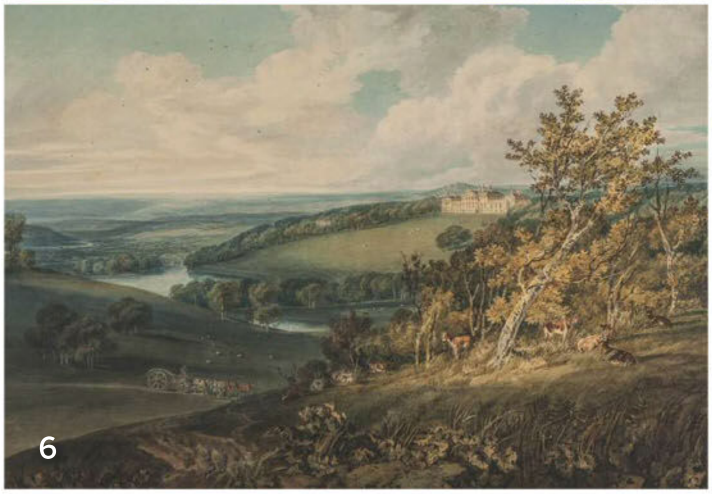


5 The parkland around **Syon House** was described in *Dodsley's Environs of London* in 1761 as 'the most beautiful piece of scenery imaginable', in which 'the Thames itself seems to belong to the gardens'.

6 In 1797, Beau Lascelles, the owner of **Harewood House**, commissioned an obscure 22-year-old artist to record the house in its now maturing park. This is one of four watercolours made by one JMW Turner, a view from the south east.

7 For many, **Petworth House** in West Sussex remains Brown's most perfect landscape. As well as this lyrical composition of water and grass, much effort went into making an abundant flower garden.

> *It was, famously, this ability to tease out the capabilities of each site that gave Lancelot Brown his enduring moniker*

▷ exquisite lesson to follow – how the flow of a line, that on plan looks virtually straight, creates the gentlest of curves that reads powerfully in the landscape; how a mere 300mm change of level in the distance could hide a road or make something appear seamless. Sometimes, looking at the plan, you would think, why bring the woodland out here, or place a group of trees there? Then as soon as you looked on the ground, it was clear. It felt like the Grand Master was looking over my shoulder, saying, given this site, this is what I would do."

It was, famously, this ability to tease out the capabilities of each site that gave Lancelot Brown his enduring moniker. Others called him a 'wizard', or an 'omnipotent magician'. Yet he fell out of fashion soon after his death, and is still not universally admired: Dominic Cole thinks him a one-trick pony (though he concedes it's a masterly trick); in his book *The Arcadian Friends*, garden critic Tim Richardson writes of his 'smothering pastoralism'. The tercentenary offers us all a chance to explore his works, and make up our own minds. ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

For full details of tercentenary celebrations, and an interactive map showing 'Capability' Brown sites nationwide, visit capabilitybrown.org

Timeline (continued)

1764 Appointed Master Gardener to George III at Hampton Court Palace, near Richmond.

1767 Acquires Manor of Fenstanton in Huntingdonshire, but the family continues to live at Hampton Court.

27. HAMPTON COURT PALACE. THE GREAT VINE

1769 He plants the Great Vine at Hampton Court Palace (above).

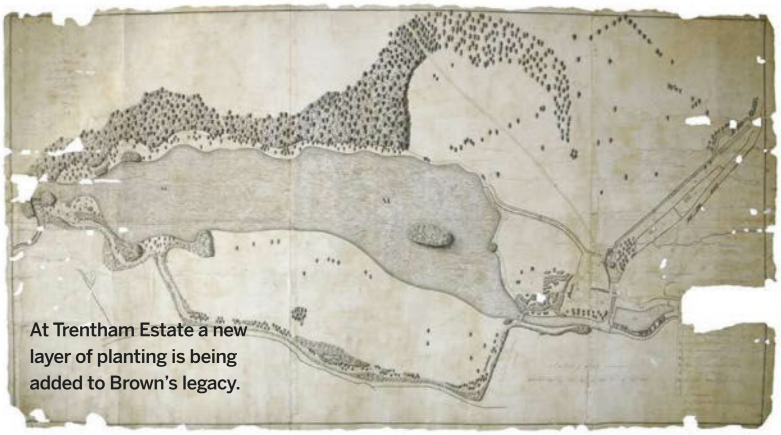
1775 A letter to his friend Thomas Dyer, reveals his thoughts on successful place-making, which should supply 'all the comforts which mankind wants in the country', and be 'exactly fit… for the owner, the Poet and the Painter'.

1783 On 5 February, Brown collapses in the street and dies the next day. His obituary reads: 'Such… was the effect of his genius that when he was the happiest man, he will be least remembered; so closely did he copy nature that his works will be mistaken.'

Sustainability Brown

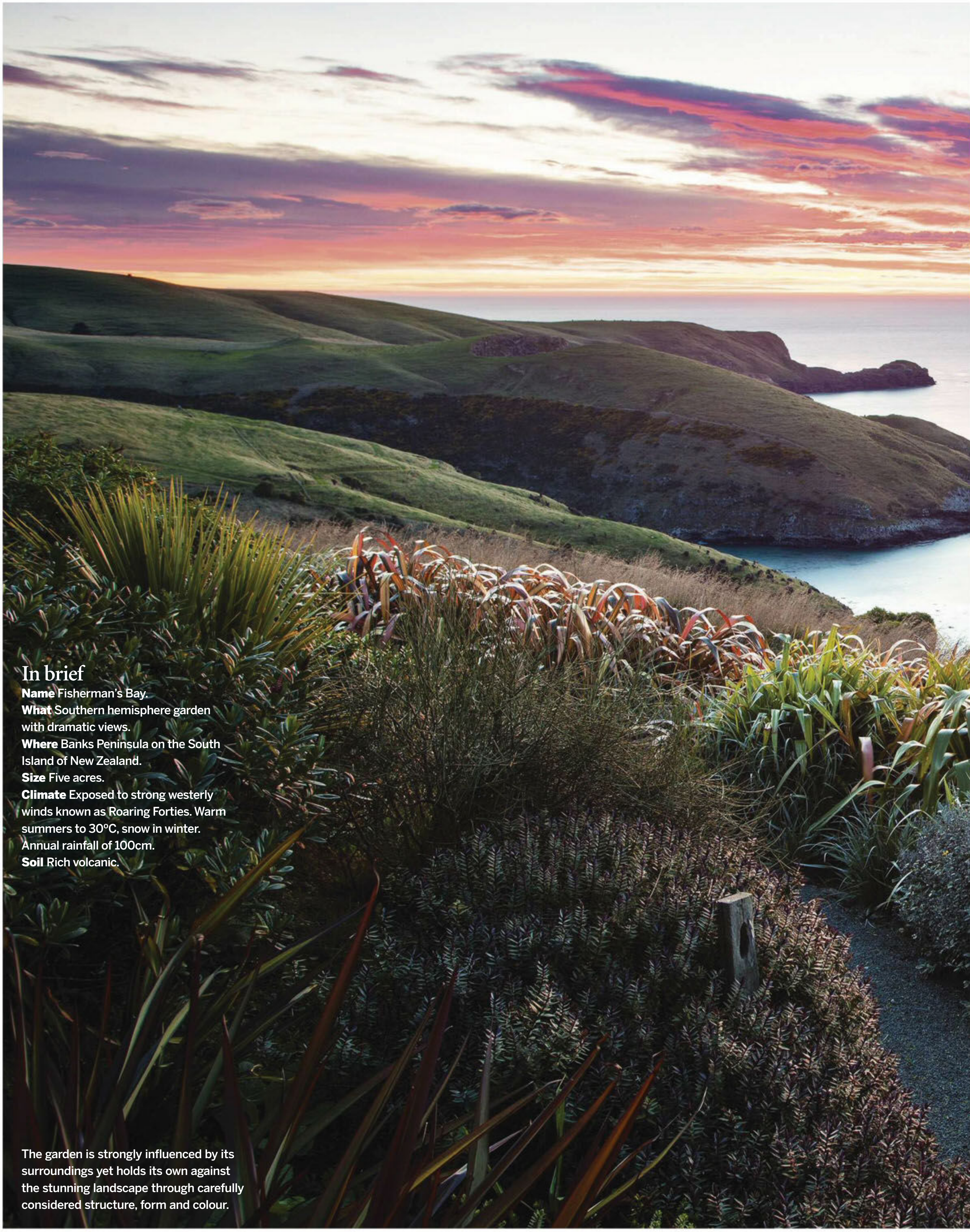
At the Trentham Estate, near Stoke-on-Trent, Michael Walker (head of Gardens and Estate) has been preparing for 2016 for the past three years, dismantling an old caravan park, clearing rhododendrons and felling huge blocks of commercial forestry to reveal 'Capability' Brown's original parkland and reunite it with his mile-long lake. Around the lake, an ambitious planting programme has begun, inspired by garden historian Mark Laird's research into Georgian plantings. Far from banishing flowers, Laird suggests that woodlands, walks and shrubberies were all abundantly decorated.

Working with meadow pioneer Nigel Dunnett, Walker is introducing vast annual meadows, woodland perennials and North American shrubs and trees to add a contemporary new layer to Brown's legacy. "We can't know for sure, but Brown's scheme for Trentham may well have been embellished with colourful plantings which, being short-lived, didn't survive," says Walker. "But even without this historical justification, by diversifying the planting, we leave Brown's landscape in better shape for the future. It shows us how adaptable his work can be – responding to today's issues – to climate change, to disease, to the requirement to appeal to a modern audience, without losing its integrity."



At Trentham Estate a new layer of planting is being added to Brown's legacy.

5 IAN DAGNALL COMMERCIAL COLLECTION / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; 6 HAREWOOD HOUSE TRUST;
7 ANDREW BUTLER; GLASSHOUSE IMAGES / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; STAFFORDSHIRE RECORD OFFICE D593/H/13/1



In brief

Name Fisherman's Bay.
What Southern hemisphere garden with dramatic views.
Where Banks Peninsula on the South Island of New Zealand.
Size Five acres.
Climate Exposed to strong westerly winds known as Roaring Forties. Warm summers to 30°C, snow in winter. Annual rainfall of 100cm.
Soil Rich volcanic.

The garden is strongly influenced by its surroundings yet holds its own against the stunning landscape through carefully considered structure, form and colour.

Between sea and sky

Set against the dramatic natural beauty of New Zealand's Banks Peninsula, owner Jill Simpson has used many native plants to create a wonderful garden that resonates with its surroundings

WORDS **CHRISTINE REID** PHOTOGRAPHS **CLAIRE TAKACS**

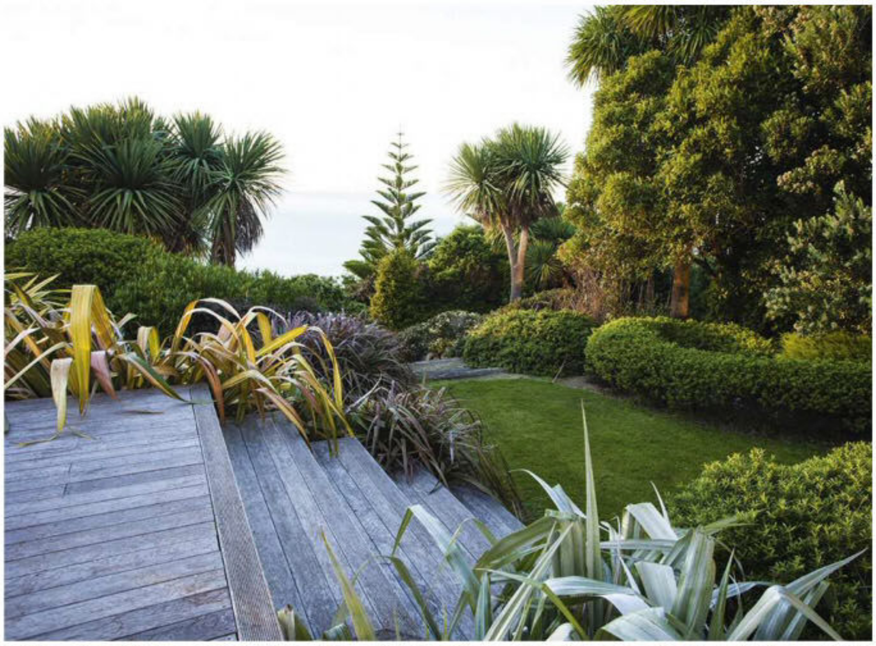
Surprises are part and parcel of the joys of garden visiting – seeing a rare plant in bloom or meeting the famous owner. However, while visiting the remote Banks Peninsula in New Zealand, garden owner Jill Simpson has a new one even for me when she calmly announces she has penguins at the bottom of the garden. I've heared of fairies, yes, but penguins – never.

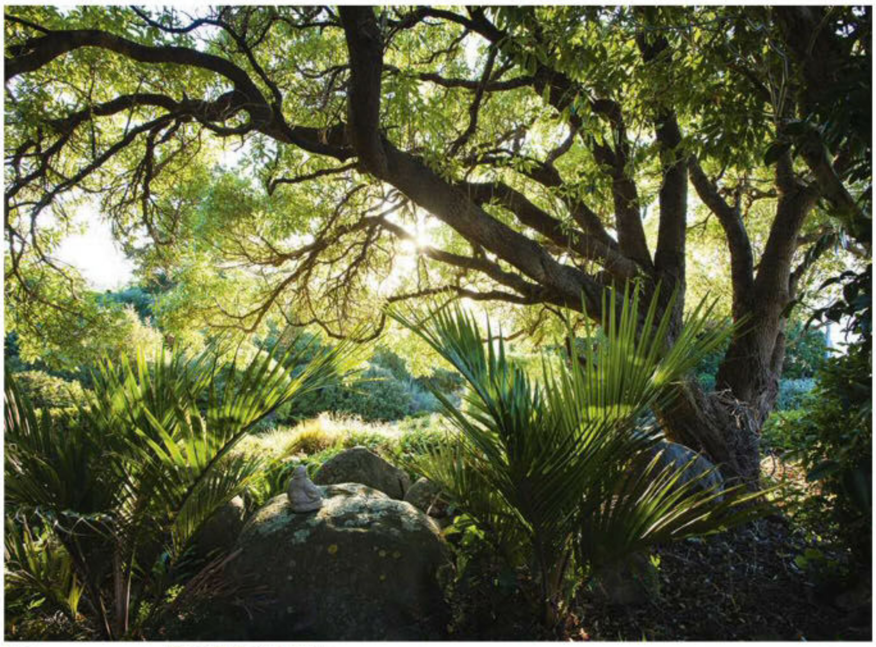
Jill and her husband Richard's garden, Fisherman's Bay, overlooks the cold waters of the southern Pacific Ocean where the gales of what are called the Roaring Forties are ever present. They can see the penguins, as well as fur seals and their pups, from vantage points in their garden 150 metres above sea level. They keep a special look-out for yellow-eyed penguins, a species that is only just surviving on the mainland.

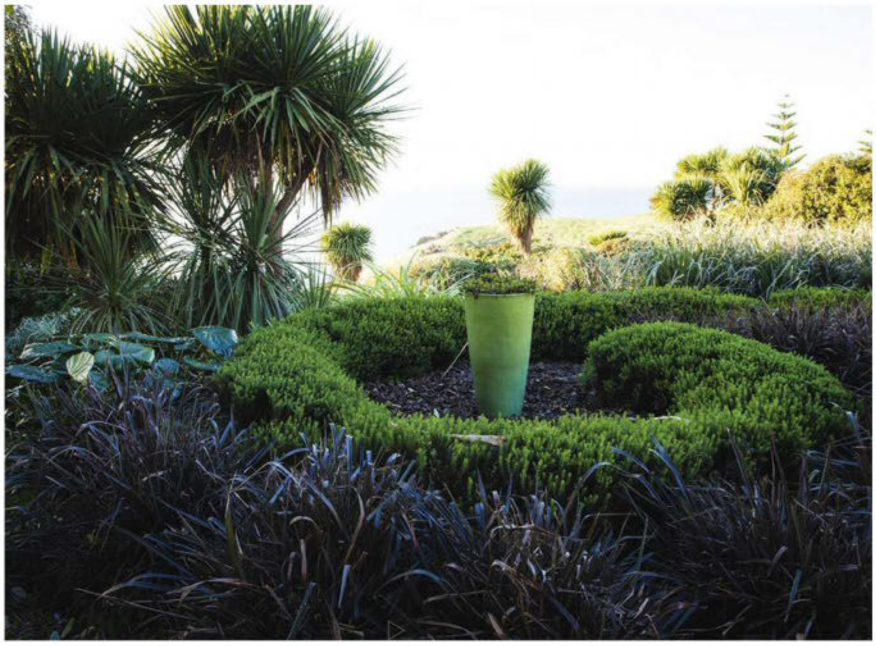
At latitude 44 degrees south, the wind is the determining factor in the garden's planting and design, with strong winds always blowing. "Wind gusts of 120km per hour are not exceptional," says Jill.

The property was originally settled as a dairy farm in the early 20th century. Old barns still huddle beneath massive Monterey cypress, shaped by the prevailing winds. Jill and Richard have owned the property for 18 years and some ten years ago Jill, an art history graduate and a trained landscape designer, set about reworking the garden.

"I've always known that gardens are part of their surroundings and that one should take advantage of a shared landscape when laying out a garden. But gardening against such dramatic views, as we have here, has been transforming," she says. "It took ▷







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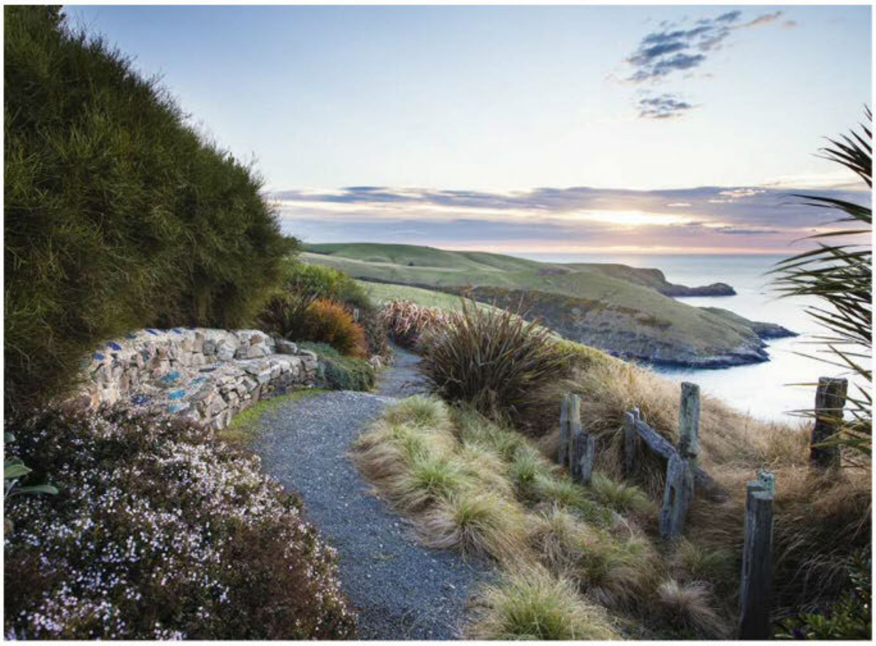
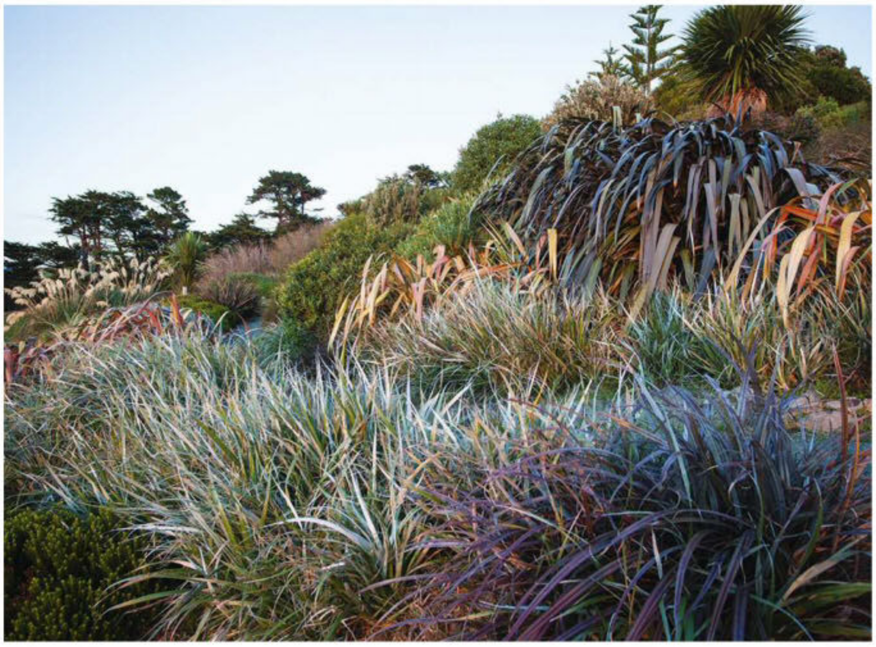
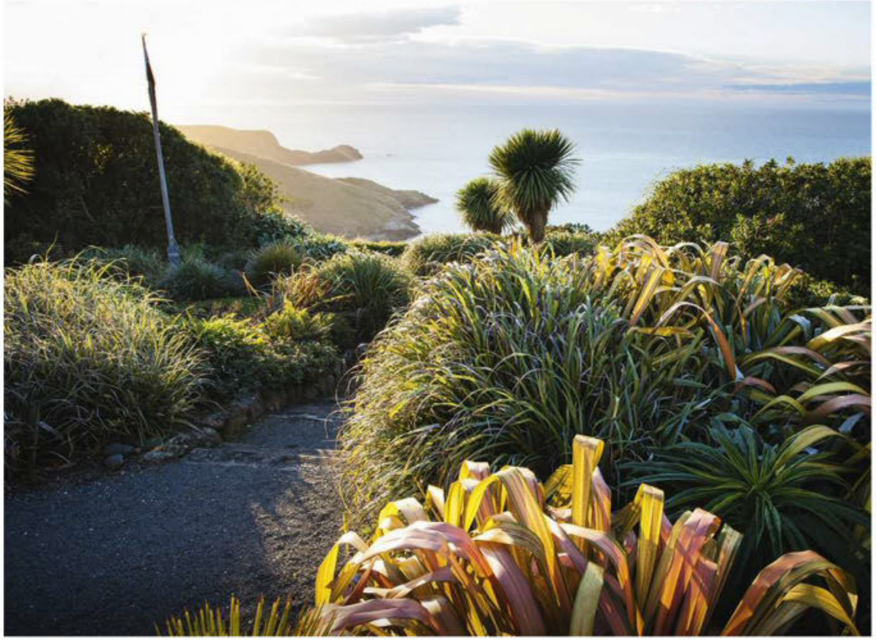
Jill likes to contrast foliage and form in the garden. Astelias, phormiums and low, rounded hedges of *Hebe vernicosa* flank the deck, with cabbage trees (*Cordyline australis*) and a Norfolk Island pine planted beyond.

The garden reveals hidden delights such as this shady nook. Sunlight filters through the branches of the ngaio tree (*Myoporum laetum*) on to the two nikau palms, New Zealand's only native palm.

Jill uses shape to bring interest to the garden. The bright-green comma of the *Hebe odora* hedge is set off by dark-leaved *Phormium* 'Bronze Baby' and the broad, glossy leaves of *Cremanthodium reniforme.*







Conserving native flora

The Banks Peninsula celebrates in name the great botanist, Sir Joseph Banks. It was named by Captain James Cook on his *Endeavour* voyage in 1770. Jill and Richard Simpson are founding members of the Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust, established in 2000.

Jill explains: "It was set up to help local landowners preserve and improve the biodiversity around our farms and homes on the Peninsula. New Zealand is a newly settled country compared to Great Britain – even the Polynesian settlers have only been here since the 13th century. Our native forests were partly removed by Maori then almost completely removed with European settlement, but natural regeneration from remaining seed sources has increased forest growth by more than 15 per cent."

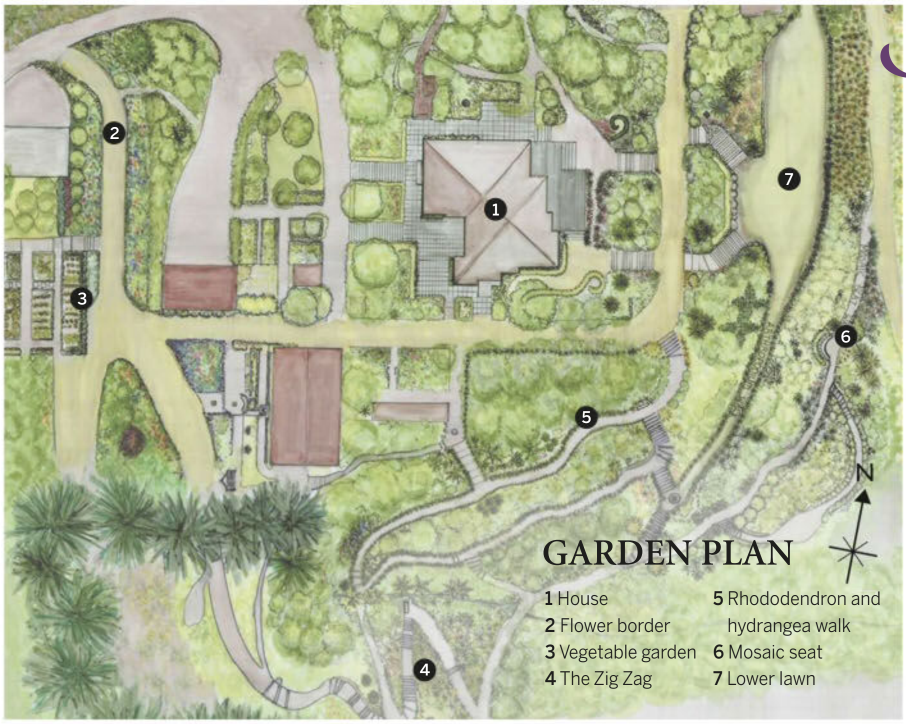
The Simpsons' farm includes over 100 hectares of regenerating, protected native bush. "It's remarkable how much of what was here has survived. Only a few years ago a delicate native fern, *Arthropteris tenella*, thought to have disappeared from the Peninsula, was found growing in our protected area. It was creeping out of a crevice where it had survived grazing sheep and possums all that time," says Jill.

This page from top

The mosaic seat is decorated with pebbles that come from the sheep station in Central Otago where Jill was born. The old lichen-encrusted posts were made by the original settlers, using native trees.

Jill uses mass plantings of native plants, such as astelias and phormiums, to give colour and texture. In the foreground *Astelia nervosa* 'Alpine Ruby' echoes the red-leaved *Phormium* 'Dark Delight' behind.

The view from the deck looking out towards Clay Point and Goat Point beyond, where large numbers of sea birds congregate. The pink and green *Phormium* 'Jester' lights up the foreground.



GARDEN PLAN

1 House
2 Flower border
3 Vegetable garden
4 The Zig Zag
5 Rhododendron and hydrangea walk
6 Mosaic seat
7 Lower lawn

gardening in such a visually dominant environment to make me realise how completely a garden is of its own place. The interplay of huge skies, rugged coast and views of sea, sky and cliffs have the strongest influence. It's also the ever-changing light from gorgeous pinks and oranges, as the sun rises from the ocean; the hard, crisp light in the middle of the day, to the soft pinks of sunset reflected in the evening sky."

Jill explains her vision of the garden's plantings: "Every planting in the garden is beautiful in its own right, but relates to the landscape, too. For example, the hebe hummocks reflect the undulating lines of the land reaching out into the distance and their flowers reflect the colours of sea and sky. I keep trying to capture the essence of place in a truly New Zealand way with low-growing shrubs and tall, grass-like plants. But then, I'm a gardener, so I can't resist colour and foliage contrast experiments as well."

One plant that wasn't easy to place in the garden was *Phormium* 'Jester'. "This native flax selection, while a lovely colour – warm pink with a green stripe – does not blend well with the blue-pink hebe flowers. However, the leaves age to a mixture of colours that look wonderful with terracotta," says Jill. "We planted it en masse outside our living room and on moonlit nights it's like a metallic sculpture."

The structure and texture of native New Zealand plants is best seen in Jill's superb collection of hebes, 150 at the last count. "They tolerate the climate really well, even the salt-laden winds," Jill says. Winding paths lead the visitor through varied areas, from a shady fern gully to a traditional flower border to an exposed rock garden. "It is possible for me to plant with one particular area in mind, and I can blend and contrast different plants as the mood takes me."

Jill continues, "As far as the design of this garden goes, whether near the house or further out, the views are always there – you just can't avoid the drama of the scenery. I have made sure that the plantings become more naturalistic and less structured as you move away from the house. I try to get the natural wetland and forest backdrop to blend with the garden plantings as seamlessly as I can manage."

The property also has more than 250 acres of protected, regenerating native bush in two coastal valleys. And as Jill's husband Richard says, "It's probably lucky we have the natural boundaries so we have to stop gardening." ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Fisherman's Bay garden, 188 Fisherman's Bay Road, Akaroa, New Zealand.
Tel +64 (0)3 304 7367.
Web fishermansbay.nz
Open By appointment September to April.

9 key plants from the garden

1 *Pimelea prostrata* 'Anatoki Blue'
This tiny-leafed native plant grows as a low mat with intense blue-grey foliage and pretty white flowers in summer. 15cm. USDA 8a-9b†.

2 *Astelia nervosa* 'Alpine Ruby'
The foliage is a good red in summer, and even richer wine-red in winter. From the Catlins area of New Zealand. 80cm.

3 *Echeveria elegans*
Native to Mexico this attractive succulent thrives in tough conditions with minimal water. 10cm. AGM*. RHS H2, USDA 9a-11.

4 *Acacia cognata* 'Limelight'
The most asked-about plant in Jill's garden, it looks like Oscar the Grouch from *Sesame Street*. It prefers a well-drained position, and only tolerates light frost. 1m. USDA 8a-10b.

5 *Libertia ixioides*
Native to the Banks Peninsula, this has wonderfully colourful foliage in full sun. Also looks great in part shade with its white flowers. 40cm.

6 *Clematis afoliata*
This unusual, leafless clematis scrambles through coprosmas in Jill's garden. It has myriad pale-yellow, strongly scented flowers in early spring. 2m. USDA 8a-9b.

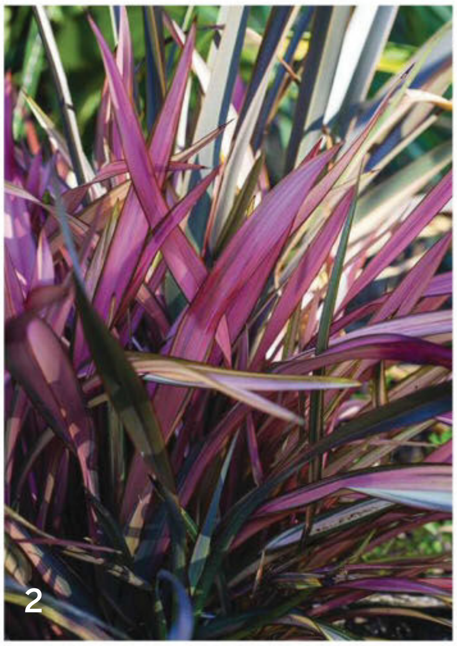
7 *Hebe pinguifolia* 'Sutherlandii'
A low-growing hebe with lovely glaucous foliage that makes a good spreading hummock in the garden. Drought tolerant, it has white flowers in summer. 45cm. USDA 7a-10a.

8 *Corokia* x *virgata* 'Frosted Chocolate'
A useful, drought-tolerant foliage plant with small, silver-bronze-coloured leaves. Good for low to medium hedging. Alternatively, it can be left to grow naturally in a shrub planting. 1.8m.

9 *Phormium* 'Maori' series
Large and beautiful New Zealand flaxes that provide tough shelter and glow when the sun is behind them. These flaxes are most vivid when young, so if not entirely hardy in the UK they could be easily propagated and renewed by division. 1.5m.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

1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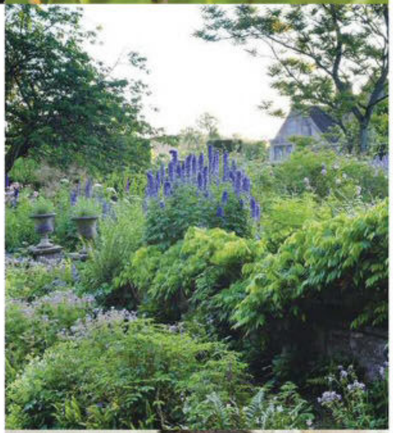

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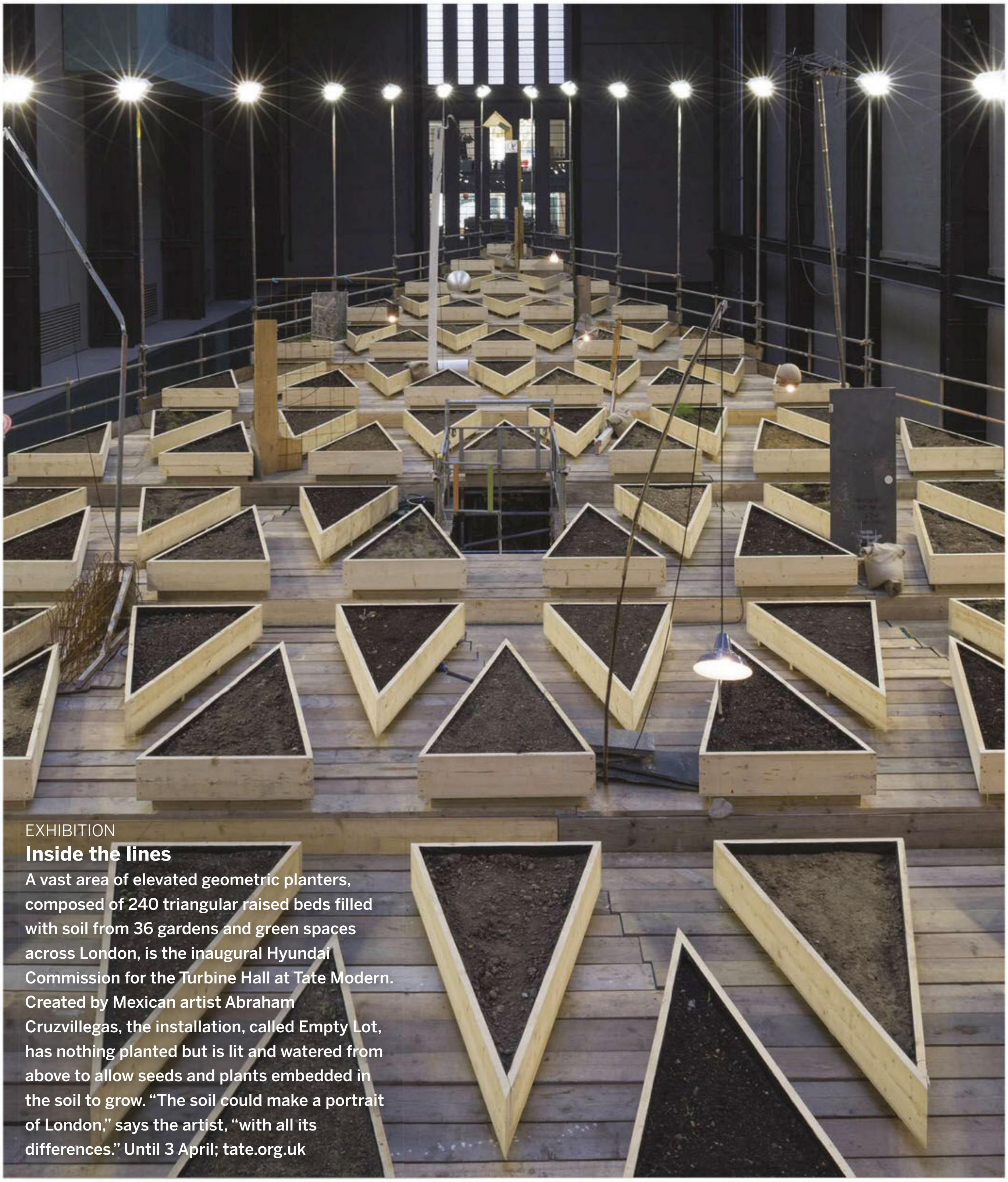
Design update, ideas and sourcebook

UPDATE COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI



EXHIBITION

Inside the lines

A vast area of elevated geometric planters, composed of 240 triangular raised beds filled with soil from 36 gardens and green spaces across London, is the inaugural Hyundai Commission for the Turbine Hall at Tate Modern. Created by Mexican artist Abraham Cruzvillegas, the installation, called Empty Lot, has nothing planted but is lit and watered from above to allow seeds and plants embedded in the soil to grow. "The soil could make a portrait of London," says the artist, "with all its differences." Until 3 April; tate.org.uk

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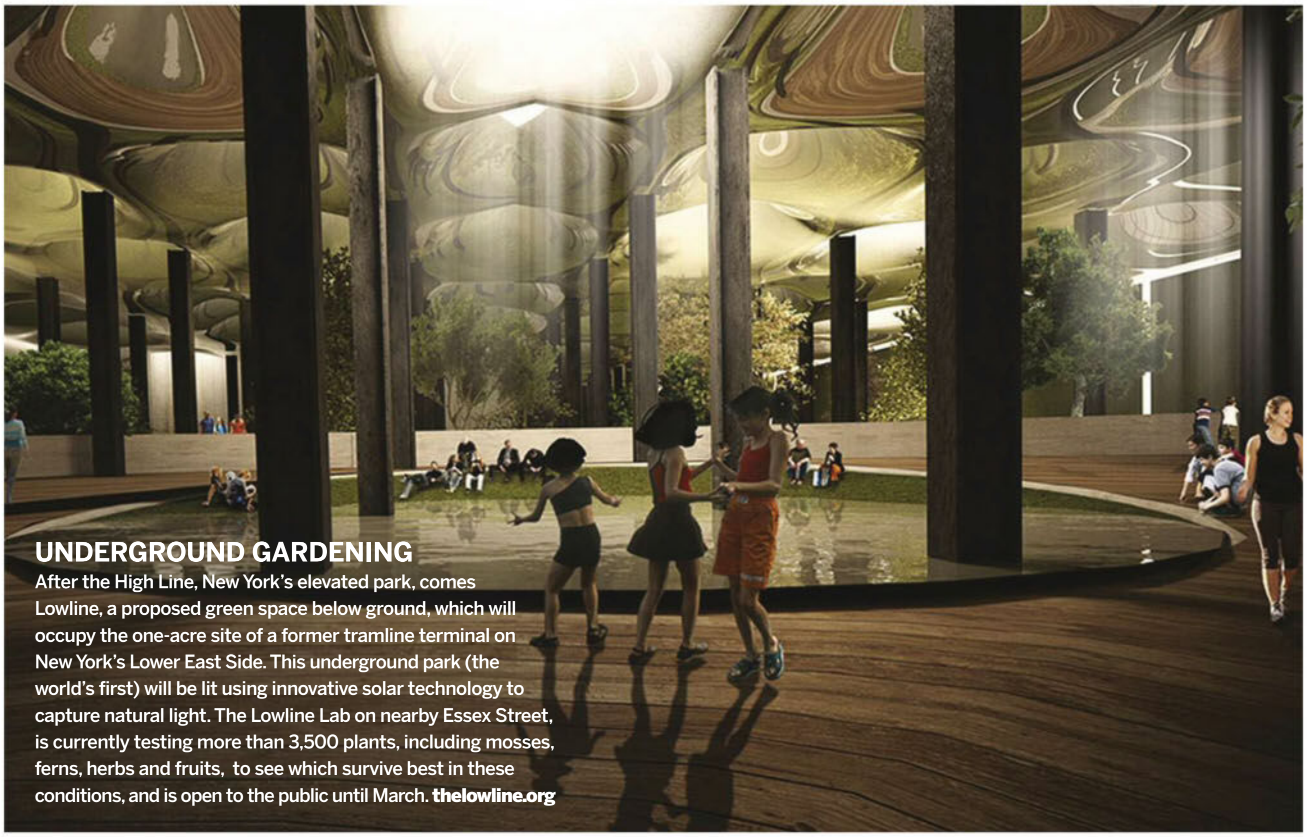


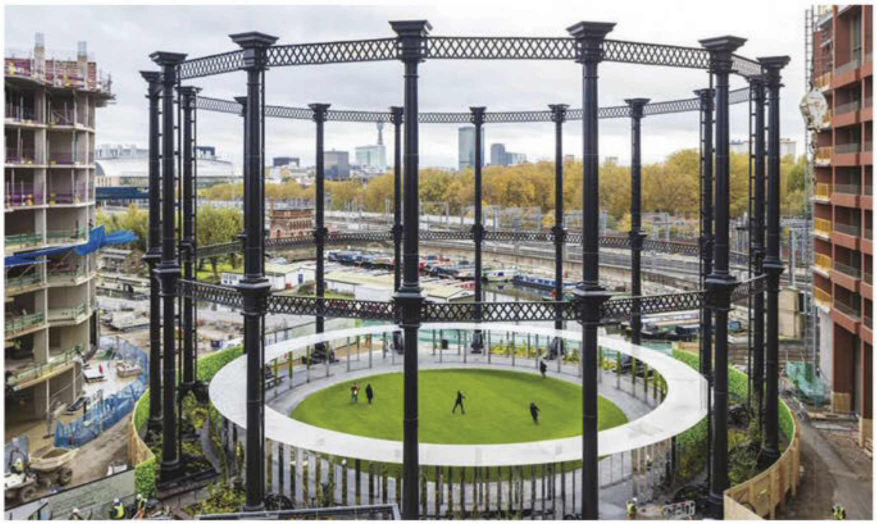
UNDERGROUND GARDENING

After the High Line, New York's elevated park, comes Lowline, a proposed green space below ground, which will occupy the one-acre site of a former tramline terminal on New York's Lower East Side. This underground park (the world's first) will be lit using innovative solar technology to capture natural light. The Lowline Lab on nearby Essex Street, is currently testing more than 3,500 plants, including mosses, ferns, herbs and fruits, to see which survive best in these conditions, and is open to the public until March. **thelowline.org**

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

In the round

A planting scheme by designer Dan Pearson, using evergreen shrubs, two ornamental trees, grasses and spring bulbs in predominantly green, white and yellow, will surround the circular green space at the centre of the newly opened Gasholder Park. Set within a restored Victorian gas holder in London's King's Cross, the circular park also features a steel-covered colonnade. **danpearsonstudio.com**



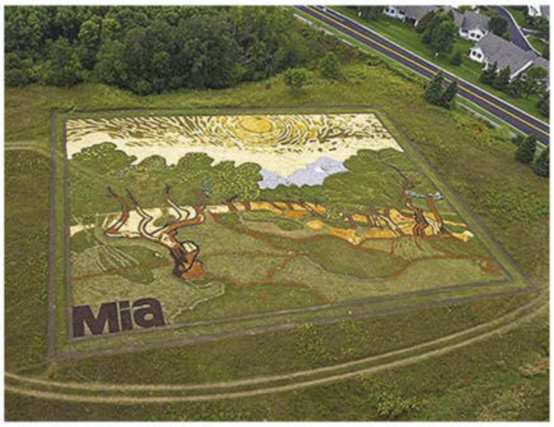
FEED THE BIRDS

This elegant Vogeli Bird Feeder, by American designer Vasse Vaugh, is handcrafted in copper and features a baffle that will shelter feeding birds and their food, as well as a small drainage hole to keep everything dry. It costs £100 from The Garden Edit. thegardenedit.com

THELOWLINE.ORG. BELL PHILLIPS ARCHITECTS

OLYMPIAN CHALLENGE

Work by the Landscape Group, a Coventry-based landscape construction and maintenance company, has been honoured in six categories in the BALI National Landscape Awards 2015, including an award for its management and maintenance of the 540-acre Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in east London (pictured). The company oversees the park's diverse range of open spaces, which includes waterways, play areas and events spaces – a challenge described by the judges as 'no mean feat'. **baliawards.co.uk**



EARTHWORK

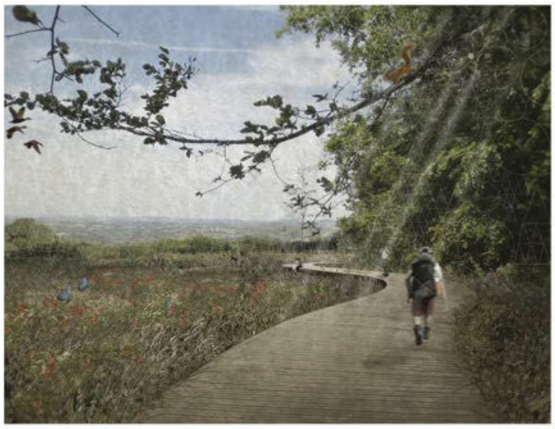
Grand art

Van Gogh's *Olive Trees* has been recreated using grasses, rocks, mulch, and plants, such as pumpkins, squash and melons, to mark the centenary of The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, where the painting hangs. Crop artist Stan Herd spent six months creating this earth work, which covers an area of more than an acre and can be seen from the air by passengers flying in and out of Minneapolis airport.

COMPETITION

Living legacy

A design by students at Edinburgh College of Art (right) was one of four winners in the 'Capability' Brown Festival 2016's Design Ideas Competition that asked entrants to imagine a landscape Brown would design if he were alive today. Natural England will draw on the winning ideas to restore Moccas, part of a Grade II* registered park and garden near Hereford. **capabilitybrown.org**



THE LANDSCAPE GROUP LTD, STAN HERD, LEOPOLD TAYLOR AND NAOMI RUBBRA

Notebook

- KLC School of Design, London, has set up the **Design Changes Lives Foundation** to provide funding and expertise to improve buildings and gardens as places for healing and care. It will also include a programme in schools to inspire young designers and bursaries for students with limited means to study at KLC. klc.co.uk
- A new exhibition, **The New American Garden**, which examines the work of landscape architects Wolfgang Oehme and James van Sweden has opened at National Building Museum in Washington DC. It features 52 photographs of their residential, civic and commercial projects. Until 1 May, 2016; nbm.org.
- **Birkbeck Garden History Group** is hosting an Introduction to Garden History study day on 30 January at Birkbeck University, London. £20; book at eventbrite.co.uk
- The Department for Communities and Local Government is providing £1.5m of new funding to create a series of **pocket parks** – small parcels of green space transformed by community groups – across the UK.
- The theme for **Orticolario 2016**, the garden show on the shores of Lake Como, will be Sixth Sense, and aims to discover a greater awareness between man and nature. The show takes place 30 September – 2 October, and the closing date for show garden proposals is 31 January. orticolario.it

Design trends 2016

With an increasing awareness of the complex yet vital role nature plays in our lives, how do garden designers see this reflected in what we want for our gardens?

James Basson

Garden designer

In general, garden design is moving towards a more ecological, sustainable approach. We are looking to use more original species in our plant choices rather than the past obsession with hybridisation. Equally, with hard landscaping, designers want a more sustainable, locally sourced material that will sit comfortably within a designed landscape.

Annie Guilfoyle

KLC School of Design

This isn't so much a prediction as a New Year wish for greater awareness of hellstrip planting. Widely practised in the USA, it involves planting up that unattractive area between the pavement and the road with tough, ground-cover plants. It's such a brilliant way to brighten up the urban landscape.

Andrew Fisher Tomlin

LCGD*

One of the big trends now taking space in our design psyche is the revival of the town square as a green community meeting place. It's a natural progression from our interest in pocket parks and neighbourhood gardens and is now more often privately funded for large, new developments.

Chris Beardshaw

Garden designer

Garden and landscapes can be guilty of being driven by the ego and self indulgence of a designer. However, we are increasingly experiencing clients who appreciate and have a sound understanding of the need to marry the role of ambition, aesthetics and a strong emotional connection when seeking a design solution for their gardens.

We are seeing the return of rockeries in the form, for example, of crevice planting with slabs of thin rock laid edge on into the ground with alpines and precious small plants grown in between.

Rosemary Alexander

English Gardening School

*LCGD IS LONDON COLLEGE OF GARDEN DESIGN

As the popularity of 'instant gardening' continues to grow, mature specimen trees will come into their own, being used as art forms and isolated focal points in both small and large spaces. In terms of hard landscaping, there is a move to using standard products, such as the countless varieties of stone products on the market, in more creative and innovative ways.

Matt Keightley

Garden designer

Formal gardens, thank goodness, do seem to be on the wane and while clients still want some showy borders for their money, they are often happy with a wilder, more naturalistic look everywhere else. Long-flowering plants and shrubs, which need less tending, continue to be increasingly popular.

Mary Keen

Garden designer and writer

I have been adding and will continue to add more edibles to my planting. However, not just in an obvious way but inter-planted with ornamentals. I'm also looking at foraging and really trying to connect people with their gardens in a different way, giving them an everyday relationship with nature.

Adam Frost

Garden designer

Clients are becoming more emotionally linked to their gardens and the landscape they sit in, whether located in rural or urban environments. Planting relates to place and the character of the setting. The love affair with hybridisation is over, replaced by an appreciation of the simplicity of native forms and their natural beauty. A return to Romanticism.

Sarah Eberle

Garden designer

IN	OUT
Using only the colour green	Alliums
Native planting	Weeping trees
Defined garden boundaries	Corten steel
Intrigue	Manicured lawns
Loose planting	Exterior upholstery
The revival of the rose	*Buxus* balls
Use of materials from the local area	Three or more materials in one space

Andrew Duff

Inchbald School of Design

THE SHORT LIST

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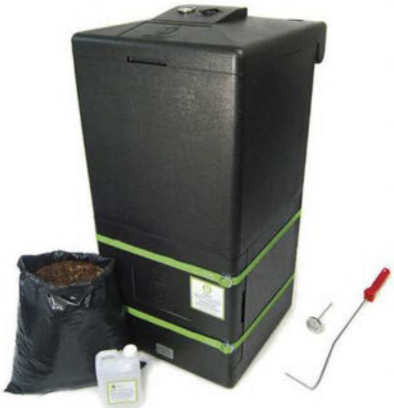
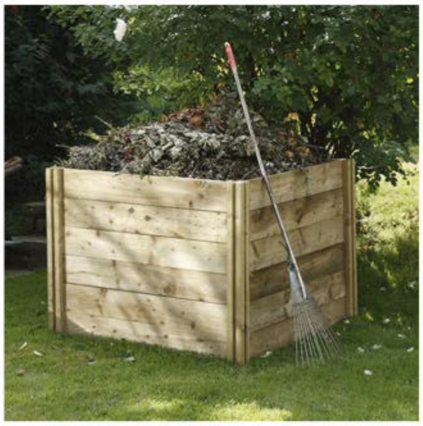
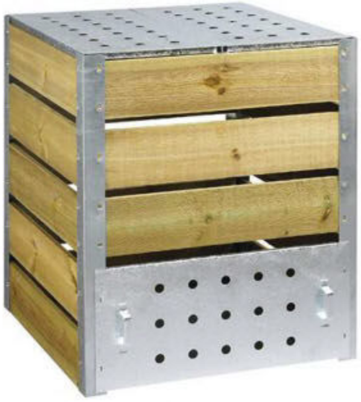


TEMPERATURE CONTROLLED
Hotbin compost bin (Extra)
£185, Hotbin,
0808 168 8499, hotbincomposting.com



EASY TO ASSEMBLE
Slot down compost box
£99.99, Crocus,
01344 578111, crocus.co.uk



METAL FRAME
Zinc and wood composter
€205.50, De Wiltfang,
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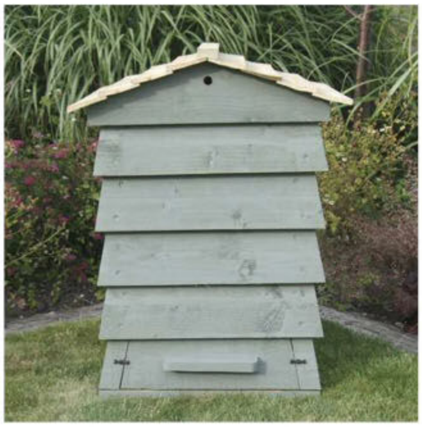
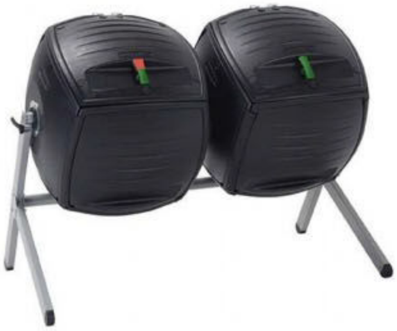
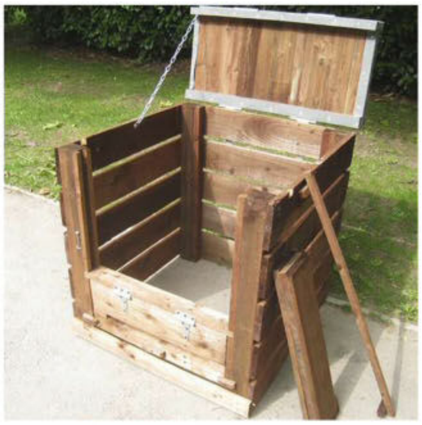


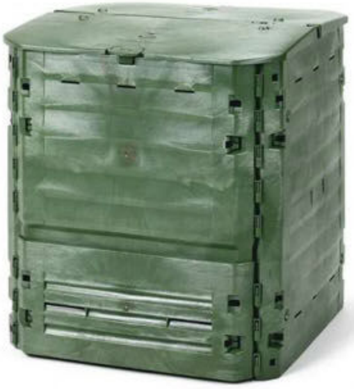
11 COLOUR OPTIONS
Beehive composter
£155, Dovetails,
07795 173400, dovetailsonline.co.uk



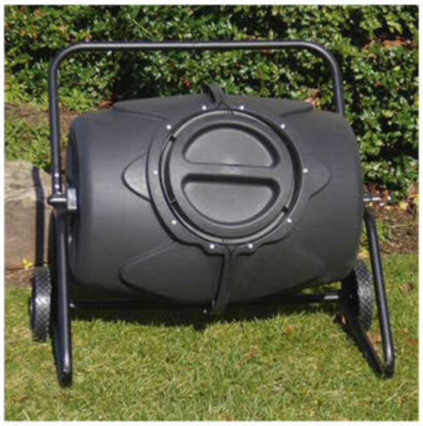
DOUBLE ACTION
Compost tumbler 380
£299, Henchman,
03333 444229, henchman.co.uk



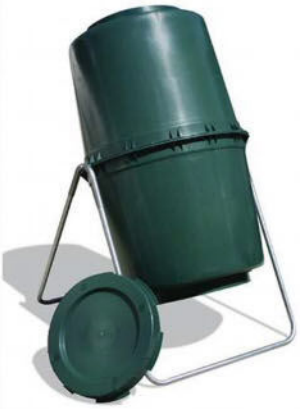
OPTIONAL ADD-ONS
Single slatted compost bin with optional lid
from £98.65, Archwood Greenhouses,
01600 890125, archwoodgreenhouses.co.uk



THERMO TECHNOLOGY
Insulating plastic thermo-composter
£86, Manufactum,
0800 096 0938, manufactum.co.uk



INTERNAL MIXING FINS
190L compost tumbler
£89.95, Original Organics,
01884 841515, originalorganics.co.uk



COMPACT
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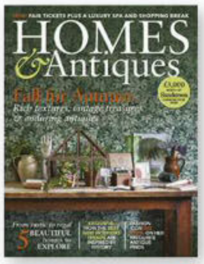
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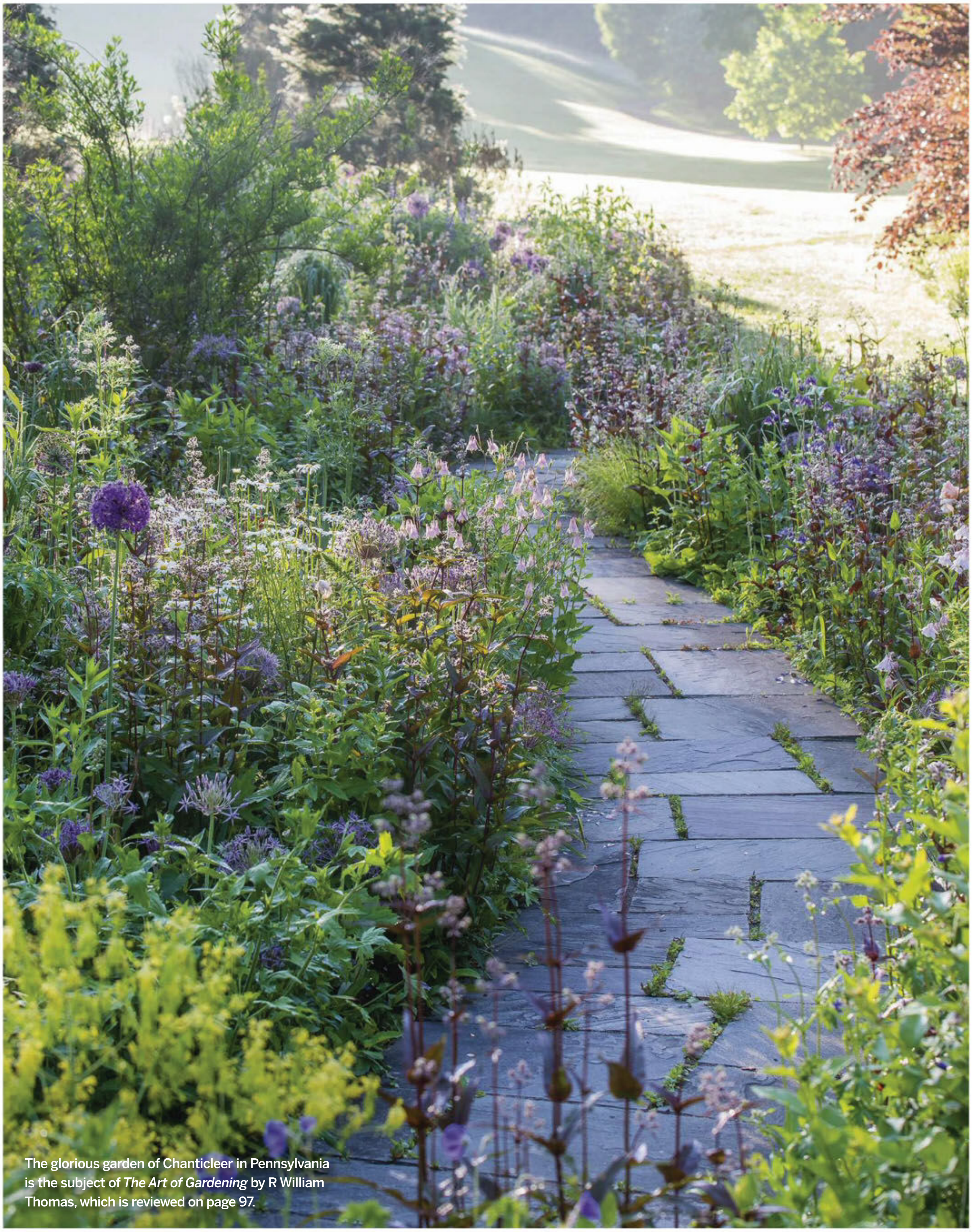
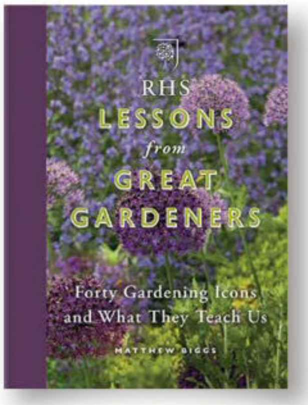


The glorious garden of Chanticleer in Pennsylvania is the subject of *The Art of Gardening* by R William Thomas, which is reviewed on page 97.

ROB CARDILLO

Book reviews



RHS LESSONS FROM GREAT GARDENERS

By Matthew Biggs

Mitchell Beazley, £14.99
ISBN 978-1784720810

An introduction to the lives of 40 eminent horticulturists and the lessons we can all learn from the gardens they created.

Reviewer Rory Dusoir is a Kew-trained gardener and writer.

Matthew Biggs briefly profiles the lives and careers of 40 influential horticulturists, ranging from Somai (putative creator of the fabled rock garden at the temple of Ryoan-ji in Japan), through André Le Nôtre, to Geoff Hamilton. Each entry includes a box full of bullet points; the 'lessons' that we can apply to our own gardens. Inevitably, the narrow choice of 40 gardeners has led to some prominent omissions, and no doubt each reader will have their own view on who should have been included – but the author has taken care to represent as wide a range as possible of styles and epochs in his final choice.

Although the premise of the book is at times an encumbrance – there has never been a more literal attempt to make a book about gardening greats 'relatable' – the author tackles his theme with warmth and energy, underpinned by extensive research. You will finish each section having learned something new about its subject and with the desire to learn more. This book offers a lively introduction to garden history for the uninformed, as well as bringing depth and colour to the subject for those with some previous background knowledge. The development of horticulture has been driven by personalities; Biggs shows a hearty appreciation of this and will hopefully inspire many garden visits with this book.

The book's production and design leave something to be desired in my opinion. Photographs are reproduced murkily and each entry is headed by a line drawing of dubious quality. The front and inside covers are gratuitously saturated with the colour lavender, like a box of soap. However, other readers may find this less off-putting than I did, and even if the prose is a bit clunky at times, there is plenty to admire in the text itself.

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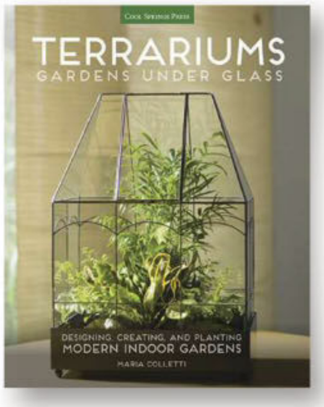
RRP £14.99. **Reader offer price £12.99** including p&p*.



TERRARIUMS: GARDENS UNDER GLASS

By Maria Colletti

Cool Springs Press, £15.99
ISBN 978-1591866336

An extremely thorough instruction manual that will guide you through the construction of a miniature garden under glass.

Reviewer Kristy Ramage is a designer and writer.

Have you ever thought about the possibilities of growing glorious vibrant green moss under bell cloches or ferns in apothecary jars? Well here is a book that explains the mechanics of growing such plants indoors, in terrariums.

This all began in 1829 when Dr Nathaniel Ward discovered a fern growing out of a piece of bark in a specimen jar containing a sphinx moth. In the closed glass container, the fern was being watered by the condensing vapour that fell like rain. Spotting the advantages of this self-watering system, Dr Ward developed the Wardian case, which was soon put to use both by the scientific community, to bring live plant material back from far flung corners, and by fashionable Victorians who wanted to show off plant collections in their drawing rooms.

Since then, terrariums have had moments of glory, the last being in the 1970s and early 1980s, but for a few years now it seems there has been a steady growth in the numbers of devotees, reviving the craft [see feature on page 44].

Delving a little deeper into the subject will unearth the most imaginative and wonderful creations, using every kind of glass vessel from vitrines to test tubes and even tiny fob watch cases. While it does not explore these more extreme examples, this book provides a good range of inspiration, with clear and simple instructions on how to ensure these delightful curiosities are a success.

Colletti clearly loves her craft, and shares knowledge she has gained while making terrariums for the Shop in the Garden at The New York Botanical Gardens. She gives invaluable advice on the crucial choice of plant material, what medium to plant it in, and the magical balance of moisture and air that can provides the ultimate in a low-maintenance indoor garden.

Book offer
RRP £15.99. **Reader offer price £12.99** including p&p*.

THE ART OF GARDENING

THE ART OF GARDENING: DESIGN INSPIRATION AND INNOVATIVE PLANTING TECHNIQUES FROM CHANTICLEER

By R William Thomas and the
Chanticleer gardeners,
photographs by Rob Cardillo

Timber Press, £25
ISBN 978-1604695441

The Art of Gardening *is an insight into one of the most innovative gardens; it is a book for anyone who views gardening as an art form.*

Reviewer Annie Guilfoyle is a garden designer.

I have visited Chanticleer twice, both times in autumn, and I can honestly say, without exaggeration it is one of the most beautiful and enchanting gardens I have ever visited. I had to read this book to discover whether it could possibly capture the spirit of the garden and look as magnificent on the page as it does in reality. Would it be able to convey the garden's extraordinary atmosphere?

Chanticleer is an unusual garden for many reasons. One is that Bill Thomas the executive director has given each one of his exceptional horticultural team a free rein, with responsibility for their own part of the garden.

The book follows a similar principle, where all the staff have contributed with some sections written by individuals, describing how they design and garden their own area. As Thomas puts it, the book is designed to be 'a conversation between our staff and you'. Chanticleer is about gardening without boundaries, expressing horticulture as an art form and, most important of all, communicating the creative thinking behind the garden.

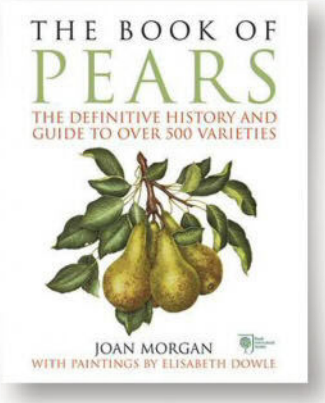
Following an introduction to the history and philosophy of the garden, the book divides into two themes: Design and Planting. Plant fanatics will revel in the inspirational planting combinations of both the familiar and unfamiliar.

Take-away ideas are plentiful – it really doesn't matter on which side of 'the pond' you garden. Rob Cardillo's exquisite photography captures the year-round magic with tantalising close ups of plants, such as *Paeonia obovata*, to sweeping views of the creek at Bell's Run.

This is more than just a beautiful book; it is essential reading for passionate gardeners everywhere; who will become enchanted by the magic of Chanticleer.

Book offer

RRP £25. **Reader offer price £22** including p&p*.


THE BOOK OF
PEARS
THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY AND GUIDE TO OVER 500 VARIETIES
JOAN MORGAN
WITH PAINTINGS BY ELISABETH DOWLE

THE BOOK OF PEARS: THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY AND GUIDE TO OVER 500 VARIETIES

By Joan Morgan, illustrations by
Elisabeth Dowle

Ebury Press, £45
ISBN 978-1785031472

Everything you could ever want to know about the pear in one beautifully constructed and satisfyingly detailed volume.

Reviewer Lia Leendertz is a garden writer and allotmenteer.

The Book of Pears feels like it comes from an older, golden age of book making. Its predecessor, *The Book of Apples*, was produced 20 years ago and has become the definitive book on the subject, thorough and beautiful, but both have more in common with Victorian horticultural tomes than any other fruit book I have seen, all painted botanical plates and quite extravagant levels of nerdy detail.

That this is a book painstakingly put together is immediately made obvious by the 40 full-page plates of pear cultivars, painted by botanical illustrator Elisabeth Dowle. Each depicts one cultivar: in blossom; unripe and growing on the tree; ripe and picked; and in cross section. It would be hard to get a more thorough sense of the pear in question without biting into it. And speaking of which I also particularly loved the tasting notes which are included in the extensive 'Directory of pear varieties' at the back of the book: 'sweet, quite rich, often a hint of vanilla or amaretto' and 'Exotically scented, reminiscent of rosewater or violets' are just two examples that had me fantasy planting. And the tasting notes are just a small part of this section: historical, geographical and horticultural detail accompany each cultivar. You will know all there is to know.

In among this wealth of dense information is woven a fascinating and accessible history of the pear, starting with its wild origins in ancient Assyria (modern-day Turkey) and taking in the monastic fruit networks, pear tree pruning styles in Victorian walled gardens, the birth of the California pear-canning industry, and much more along the way. This book is a massive achievement and a hugely satisfying read, just the thing to pore over on winter evenings, notebook and catalogues to hand.

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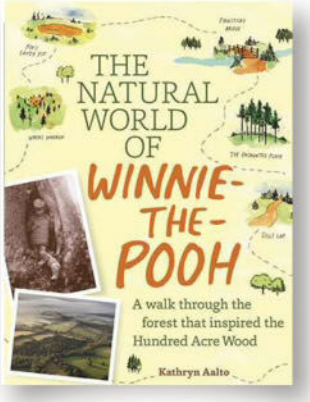
Book reviews


THE NATURAL WORLD OF WINNIE-THE-POOH
A walk through the forest that inspired the Hundred Acre Wood
Kathryn Aalto

THE NATURAL WORLD OF WINNIE-THE-POOH

By Kathryn Aalto

Timber Press, £15
ISBN 978-1604695991

A nostalgic read that explores the magical reality behind the fictitious world of Winnie-the-Pooh and the Hundred Acre Wood.

Reviewer Alys Hurn is the editorial assistant at Gardens Illustrated.

The Winnie-the-Pooh stories have ignited the imagination of children and adults alike since the first book featuring the eponymous bear was published in 1926. As Kathryn Aalto is quick to point out, reading the stories by AA Milne stirs up a considerable sense of nostalgia, something that comes through in the writing of this book.

Aalto has divided the book into three main sections: the first is contextual, looking back at Milne's childhood, his friendship with illustrator EH Shepard, and how their mutual love for nature contributed to the unparalleled success of the Pooh books.

She also explores Cotchford Farm on the edge of Ashdown Forest, where Milne lived for many years and where his son, Christopher Robin, grew up.

The second part – illustrated with Shepard's original drawings and quotes from the Pooh books – joyfully introduces you to this real-life Hundred Acre Wood, and the origins of the stories. For example, the inspiration for Pooh's house came from a hollowed out walnut tree at the top of their garden in which Christopher Robin spent hours playing inside with his toy bear.

In the final section, Aalto quite rightly states that the forest and its ancient landscape has a story of its own and she attempts to delve into its many natural attractions.

It is evident from the start, that this has been a labour of love for Aalto. Her extensive research of the forest and recurring references to Milne's life shines through and you quickly discover the real story behind the fictitious tales of a boy and his bear.

However, she frustratingly only scratches the surface and what starts as a warmly written, intriguing study ends in something of a rush, jumping from one topic to the next. There are plenty of titbits of information to pick up but you are left wanting more.

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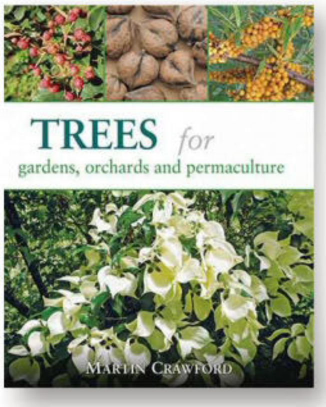


TREES FOR GARDENS, ORCHARDS AND PERMACULTURE

By Martin Crawford

Permanent Publications, £24.95
ISBN 978-1856232166

More that 100 of the best trees producing fruits, nuts, edible leaves and other useful products for Europe and North America.

Reviewer Alys Fowler is gardener, author and Guardian *columnist.*

In some ways, this covers much of the same territory of Martin Crawford's first book *Creating a Forest Garden*. However, this is a more extensive publication because, as its name suggests, it focuses solely on trees.

It's written with both North American and European readers in mind – a reminder of how permaculture is rippling around the world and how little work on this subject there is. Crawford is one of the subject's leading authorities, well known for his extensive research into cultivars, pruning and maintenance, and for his attention to detail.

For instance, much is made of pollination requirements. You can learn everything from the quality of the pollen to how often you need to add pollinators in a trellis or hedgerow system when you are growing for food. This sort of detail is hugely important. Likewise, details on climate type and winter hardiness make sure that you will end up with a tree that has a chance of surving its conditions rather than one where you simply hope it might.

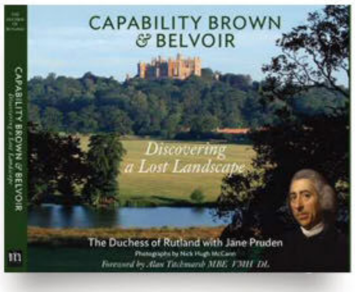
The book covers familiar nuts and fruits, such as hazelnuts and pears, explaining expected yields, when to pick for taste and storage and how long produce will keep at different room temperatures, but also features more unusual trees, such as Japanese heartnuts, which are walnuts with heart-shaped nuts (a complete protein apparently).

For the designer with a keen eye, there are gems to be found among these more unusual edibles, such as juneberry, a small tree that is perfect for town gardens and which has fruits that taste a little like blueberries, or the pretty tree *Halesia carolina*, which produces seedpods that taste of cucumber.

Also included is an extensive list of suppliers for both continents, making this an invaluable book that will easily pay back its cover price in bountiful harvests.

Book offer

RRP £24.95. **Reader offer price £21.95** including p&p*.



CAPABILITY BROWN & BELVOIR

By The Duchess of Rutland with Jane Pruden, photographs by Nick Hugh McCann

Published by Nick McCann Associates, £35
ISBN 978-0951689165

A personalised tour by the Duchess of Rutland of Belvoir Castle, with emphasis on the 'Capability' Brown parkland.

Reviewer Tim Richardson is a garden critic and regular columnist.

The impetus for this beautifully illustrated if rather idiosyncratic homage to Belvoir Castle in Leicestershire was the continuing restoration of 'Capability' Brown's last major work. The Duchess of Rutland refers on several occasions to evidence of a 'medievalist turn', in that Brown included the 'chase' and the warren as integral elements of his design.

But this is not a garden-history book; it's a personal paean to a place. The Duchess's text oscillates disarmingly between meticulous historical study to a chatty style that sometimes strays into the realms of 'too much information'.

There are funny little family stories, such as the dowager duchess Isabella who became known as 'Was-a-bella' after she lost a front tooth (a replacement was duly procured from a servant's mouth), while the Duchess's Aunt Ursie who sounds positively Wodehousian, makes sporadic appearances to reminisce about the gardens.

It all clips along at quite a gallop. In fact on page 144 the Duchess suddenly appears in a photo riding a white stallion, clad in scarlet riding gloves and a velvet cloak to recreate a George Sanders painting of an earlier duchess. She – Emma, the current duchess – can also be spied in various other photographs wearing a natty Regency tartan number with matching hat, nicely counter-balancing all the ancient maps and documents reprinted at large size and in colour.

Every inch of Belvoir is celebrated in Nick Hugh McCann's fine photographs, from the rhododendrons of the Japanese woodland, to the dairy, the grottoes, the lakes, the avenues and mausoleum. The life of the estate is also given prominence – I especially loved the double-page spread of the bounding foxhounds of the famed Belvoir Hunt.

Book offer

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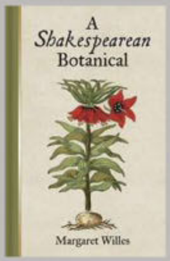
Other books

More books to try this month – from the beauty of heritage vegetables, to the elements of the world's largest grasslands



A SHAKESPEAREAN BOTANICAL

By Margaret Willes
Bodleian Library Publishing, £12.99
ISBN 978-1851244379

An intriguing, pocket-sized book that looks into the folklore of plants in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.

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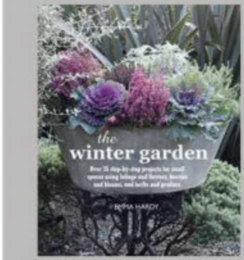

THE WINTER GARDEN

By Emma Hardy
Published by CICO Books, £14.99
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Creative ideas to brighten winter gardens from foliage-filled baskets to richly planted pots.

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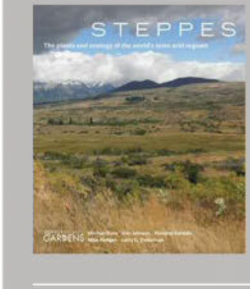

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By Michael Bone et al.
Timber Press, £35
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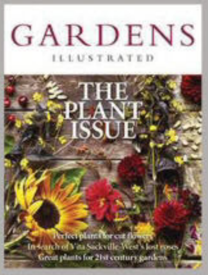

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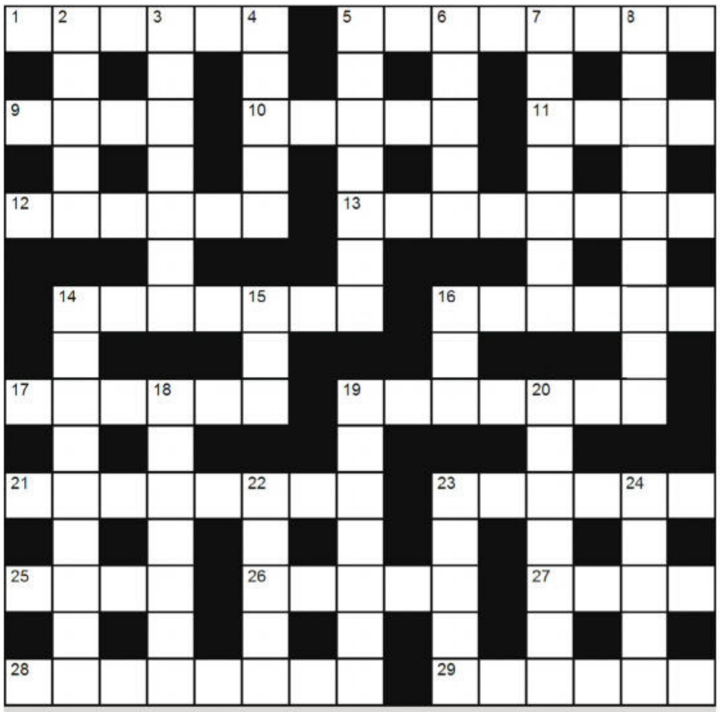

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5 Best frock to scatter fertiliser on soil? (3-5)
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10 Hickory genus… held by apothecary awkwardly (5)
11 Herb that's a money maker! (4)
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3 Spice obtained from *Crocus sativus* (7)
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SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

SOLUTIONS TO THE CHRISTMAS PRIZE CROSSWORD IN ISSUE 228

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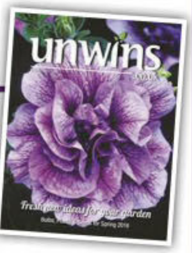

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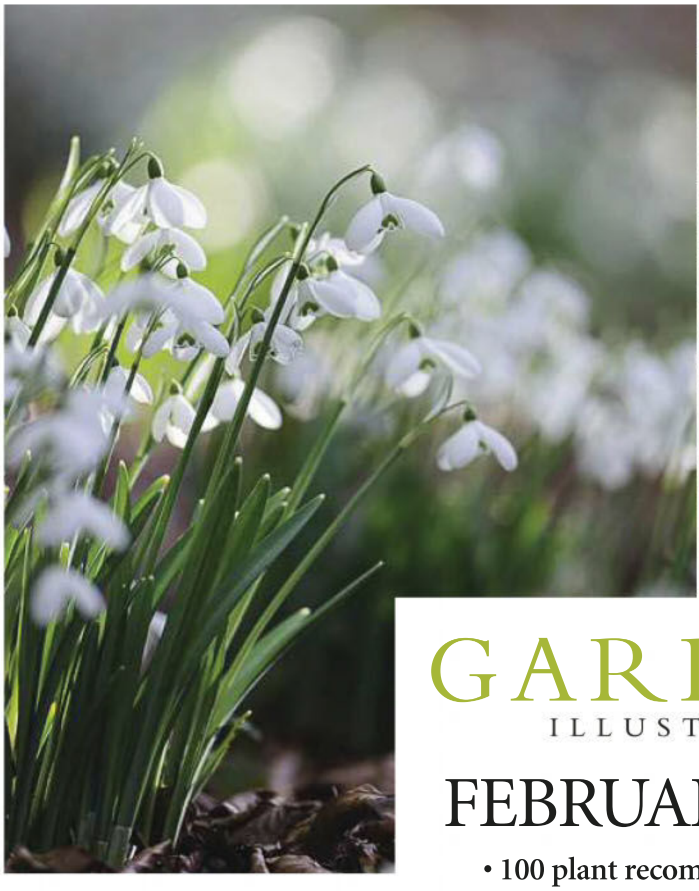

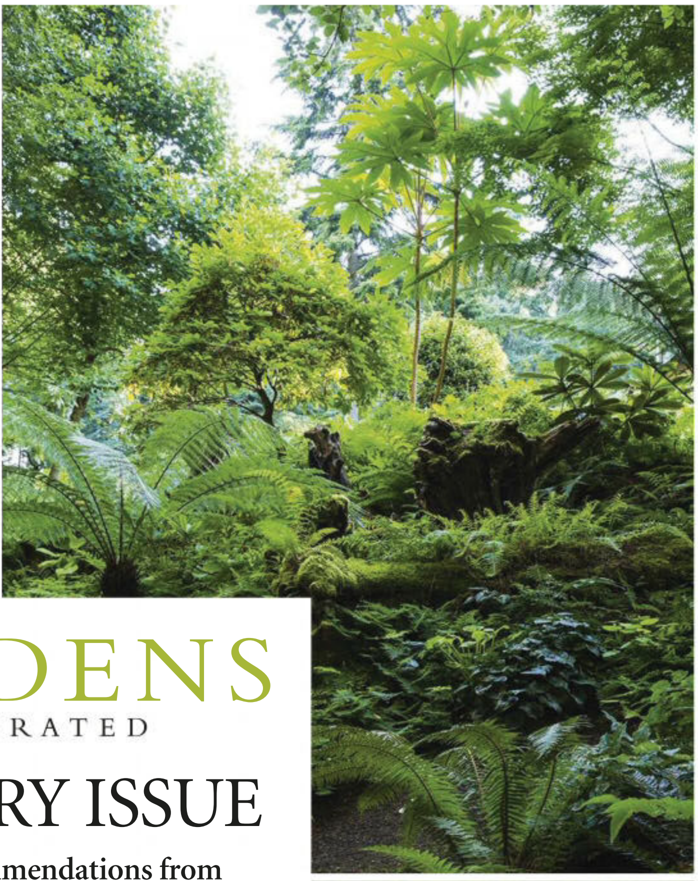

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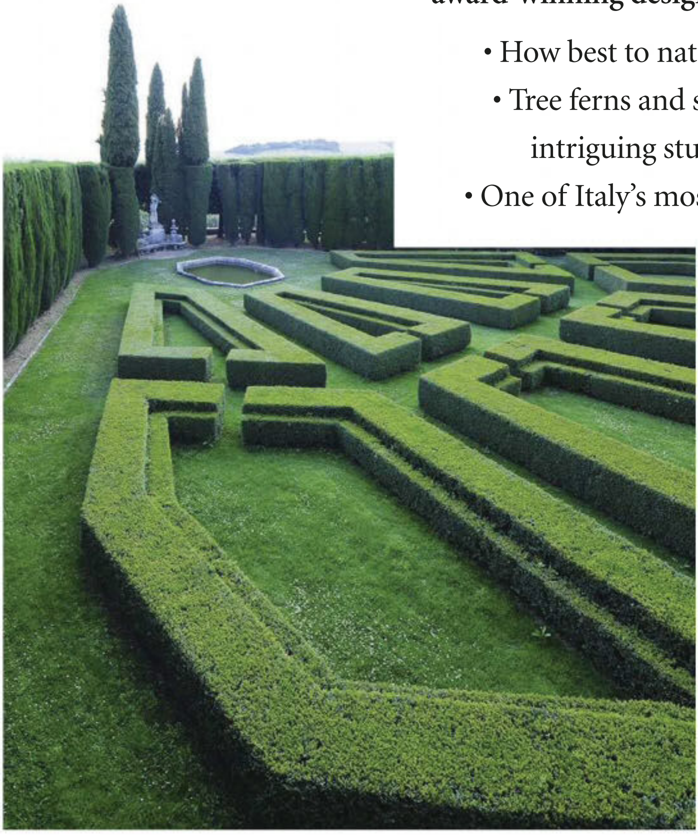

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Wizards from Oz

Frank discovers some magical Australian natives for his Californian garden

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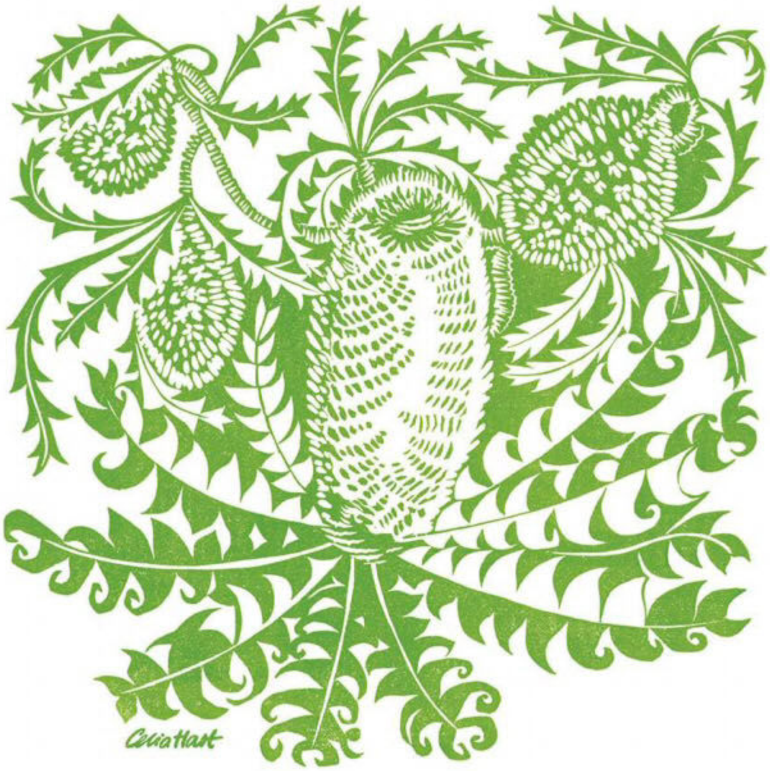

Some Banksia *resemble a peeled pineapple, some a device for cleaning chandeliers*

In December I mentioned that there was a nursery down the road that specialised in Australian natives. At that moment I may not have been entirely well disposed towards the idea, but barely was the ink dry on those sentiments when hubris came to bite me on the rear end. I had a mail from a plant connoisseur in Long Beach to say that that nursery was having a sale, and how excited he suddenly was at the prospect of visiting me.

Now, he had been putting off his visit for about the same amount of time as I had been putting off investigating the nursery in question, and the fact that he was finally prepared to commit to the drive made me think that there might be something worth looking at, with the added inducement of a discount if I were tempted. As it turned out I had to tell him that the sale would coincide with us having a houseful of jet-lagged toddlers (it doesn't take many to fill a house), which tipped the balance back towards his not venturing out of Long Beach after all, which was unfortunate because I could have done with some guidance among the Australian flora. On the other hand it was the jet-lagged toddlers which were the ultimate inducement to take the truck, alone, for a couple of hours of retail therapy.

I had not imagined spending much. My impression of Australian plants was that, while there are quite a few that are admirable and desirable, they tend to be from the damper corners and milder outposts of the continent. I had wanted a couple of the purple form of *Acacia baileyana*, if only because I had killed so many in England that I felt I owed the poor plant something, but those had been got from another place a fortnight before. Nothing then on the shopping list except maybe a couple of kangaroo paws, if the colours were nice enough.

Stupidly, I had forgotten the existence of banksias. Had, in fact, forgotten the whole of *Proteaceae*, or that, thanks to the broken supercontinent of Gondwana, Australia is as rich in it as South Africa. There are also hakeas and grevilleas and there used to be dryandras (there still are, really, but they've been shoehorned into *Banksia*). But it was the banksias that hit me in the face and wallet the moment I stepped though the gate.

For those of you without an immediate mental picture of a *Banksia*, think of otherworldly flowers, often shaped like a pine cone; sometimes spiky and sometimes fluffy in the petal. Some resemble a peeled pineapple, some a device for cleaning chandeliers. Most of them you would grow for the foliage alone, which varies from respectably interesting to positively bizarre: my favourites being the kind that look as though they've been cut in a curving zig-zag, as in *B. grandis*, or into felt Christmas trees as in *B. aculeata*.

There were 61 species of *Banksia* on the nursery list and I was grateful for the sale because, wanting them all, at least I was able to decide which to get first by grabbing those on offer at a cut price. The blood was up. Here was a *Xanthorrhoea* too, that I had been looking for elsewhere, having forgotten it was Australian, and some very weird and wonderful acacias, of which I couldn't resist *A. cultriformis*, with tiny jade triangular leaves. It also turned out that the plants were not exclusively Australian. There were proteas and restios to join the congregation by the till.

I am sorry now that I was so beastly about Australia in December (though most of the Australians I know quite like a good beasting). There was, at one point, an idea to make a bit of fynbos at one end of the house. That has been extended round to the front, which seems to be transforming into a *Banksia* garden. If I find the place selling *Embothrium* it will be Gondwana reunited. ☐

Frank Ronan is a novelist who gardens in both the UK and USA.

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